PRAYER WITH THE HARP OF THE SPIRIT

THE PRAYER OF ASIAN CHURCHES

VOLUME II

THE CROWN OF THE YEAR - PART I

Seasons
of the Annunciation to the Mother of God and
of the Nativity of our Lord, His Baptism and Epiphany
Evening Prayer and Night Vigil

PRAYER WITH THE HARP OF THE SPIRIT

The Crown of the Year

Is a translation from the Syriac of the *Penqitho*, the Book of Prayer for Sundays and feast days, throughout the year, in the Churches of the Antiochean tradition. The Book consists of some 4000 pages, in seven volumes in-folio, in the original Syriac. Up to now there existed only very fragmentary translations. This is the first full text translation of *Ramsho*, the Evening Prayer, and *Lilio*, the Night Vigil, for congregational services as they are celebrated by the monastic community of Kurisumala Ashram, Kerala, India.

The present volume covers approximately one third of the liturgical year, from the initial Sundays of the Church, through the seasons of *Suboro*, Annunciation, of the Nativity of our Lord, and of His Baptism and Epiphany. In addition to these Sunday celebrations it contains daily services for the ferial days of *Suboro*, besides five major feasts of our Lord, four of the Mother of God and feasts of prominent saints.

These include among others John the Baptist, Stephen the Firstborn of Martyrs, Anthony the Great and the Monastic Fathers, Robert, Alberic and Stephen, the three Founders of Citeaux, Ephrem and Isaac the great teachers of prayer.

Among these feasts are new compositions, of which it has been said "the author has freely used his sources with striking effect, reflecting the Christian freedom and creative genius of the great masters of liturgical prayer of the past."

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Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

PRAYER

WITH THE HARP OF THE SPIRIT

THE PRAYER OF ASIAN CHURCHES

VOLUME II

The Crown of the Year - Part I

Seasons
of the Annunciation to the Mother of God and
of the Nativity of our Lord, His Baptism and Epiphany
Evening Prayer and Night Vigil

Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit by Francis Acharya, Volume II, The Crown of the Year, Part I. First published in 1982 with a subsidy of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. New Revised Edition published by, and available at Kurisumala Ashram, Cistercian Abbey, Vagamon, 685503, Kerala, India, printed in 1999 at CMS Press, Kottayam.

PRAYER

WITH THE HARP OF THE SPIRIT

THE PRAYER OF ASIAN CHURCHES

VOLUME II

Evening Prayer and Night Vigil,
translated from the original Syriac
of the Penqitho of Mosul 1886-1896, Vols.II-III
the Book of the Prayer Services
of the Churches of the Antiochean Rite
for Sundays and Feasts throughout the year
and adapted for celebration by a monastic community.

The Crown of the Year - Part I

Seasons

of the Annunciation to the Mother of God
and of the Nativity of our Lord, His Baptism and Epiphany

BAPTISM AND EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD 2000
REVISED EDITION

KURISUMALA ASHRAM, VAGAMON 685503, KERALA, INDIA

A Persian Cross, as they are found in old Syrian churches in South India, venerated as the life-giving Cross. Its power is symbolized by the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove that kisses its summit, and by the four rivers of living water which, like the four rivers of Paradise, flow from its foundation to the four quarters of the world. This Cross is found in the church on Saint Thomas Mount, Madras. It is carved on a granite slab of about two feet square, in the centre of an arch resting on two pillars. The inscription on the arch, not yet deciphered, is believed to be in old Sanskrit of Persia. But the characters are described as Sassanian-Pahlavi, generally dated of the 7th or 8th century.

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commemorates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to guide us into all the truth and to make us share in the fullness of God's life.

The celebration of these sacraments is performed in the Church's festivals:

> You entered within me and you enlightened me,
> says the Church to the apostles.
> You made me like the daughter of the King,
> adorning me with the jewels of His precious mysteries.
>
> Glory to Him who at two festivals
> distributed His gifts among His apostles.
> At one festival He gave His flesh and blood,
> and at the other the Spirit with power.[3]

Time is therefore the appropriate framework for the celebration of the prayer of the Church. The hours of the day and the watches of the night mark the time of Christ. The weekly celebration of the Economy of Salvation culminates, on the Lord's Day, in the common thanksgiving and sharing of the believers in His Passion, Death and Resurrection, in anticipation of His coming in glory at the end of time.

> Great is this day, Sunday, the Lord's Day,
> when He rose from the dead and the nations confessed
> the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God.
> Blessed are those who keep it in faith. Halleluia!
>
> On this passing Sunday, Son of God,
> You gave us the bread of life and the cup of salvation.
> On that Sunday which will never pass away,
> make us worthy to exult at Your right hand,
> and to behold Your compassion. Halleluia! [4]

The course of the year provides a fuller unfolding of the Economy of Salvation. Already the Psalmist had been prompted to offer hymns of praise and thanksgiving for the seasonal blessings of the year: 'You crown the year with Your bounty,' (Psalm 65), or in a more pregnant translation: 'You crown the peaks with Your rains,' the rains being the seasonal manifestations of God's love and bounty for the people and their land. It was only natural for the Church to use this imagery for the Mysteries of Christ, sources of her life and of all blessings, as they are celebrated in the course of the year. The prophets had already described

the promised salvation in such terms as the day of deliverance, the year of grace. Jesus Himself had made their words His own when at Nazareth He declared:

> The Lord has sent me to proclaim
> that the time has come
> when He will save His people...
> This word of the Prophet has come true today
> as I was reading it to you.[5]

The Crown of the Year is therefore the most comprehensive setting of the Churches' celebration of the Economy of Salvation and the Mysteries commemorated are the jewels of this crown:

> Like to pearls without flaw set in the crown of the king are the Mysteries of His Economy.

The commemorations of the saints are praised in the same manner. Stephen is a fair jewel of the crown of the Holy Church.[6]

The salvific power of the Crown of the Year is revealed in a number of prayers celebrating both the mysteries of Christ and the memorials of the saints:

> Christ, Fountain-head of all feasts and Fulfilment of all festivals, when You saw that humankind was estranged from You and deprived of celebrating You in festivals on account of sin, and bound to a crude way of life, and by the deceit of the Serpent unable to enjoy festivals which give delight in God, You who are good and who have compassion on what You have fashioned, could not endure that it should be lost. You willed to become man to heal Your creature, and again You ordered an Economy, and with that Economy, festivals which should bring healing to him. We today are assembled to keep festival in memory of John the Baptist.....[7]

> We give thanks to You, our Lord Jesus Christ, who visit us and bring us great joy in the commemoration of our fathers whose teachings and examples are wonderful illustrations of Your deeds and of Your words to us. By them our hearts, weighed down by weariness and trials, are comforted, our lives are seen in a new light, as humility increases and faith is strengthened.[8]

Through the celebration of the Crown of the Year, the assembly re-enacts and lives the Mysteries of Salvation in continuation of the Incarnation of her Lord, and she draws life from Him:

> Christ our God who came to this world to make all things new, remove from Your Churches the old leaven that has increased with the centuries. Restore in them the poverty of Your Incarnation and make them shine with the truth and the simplicity of Your Gospel.[9]

Meanwhile the Church realizes her own identity by recalling and proclaiming what her Lord has done and continues to do for her:

> Rise and be clothed in light, O Church of true believers. Your Light is come, the Lord exalted and terrible comes to dwell in you. All peoples and nations are gathered in you to hear the Good News.... He has established His sacred altar within you and has placed in you His body and His blood.... that you may inherit eternal life, in the mysterious dwellings where death has no power.[10]

By doing this she follows her call and fulfils her mission:

> Christ our God who called Your Church through the prophets and made her reach out to the ends of the world through the apostles, and made her radiant with the love of Your saints through the Holy Spirit, strengthen her for the spiritual service the world expects from her....[11]

The Son enlightens the whole world by the splendour of His Economy. The mysteries celebrate the works accomplished by the Beloved Son for the manifestation of His Economy. Heaven and earth join in these celebrations: Those above and those below give praise for God's revelation to Joseph, and thanksgiving is sung by the whole body of the Church.[12] As the Church realizes that Christ marked the beginning of His Economy—His Annunciation, Nativity and Epiphany—with great wonders, she prays that with His help she may reveal herself as the sacrament of salvation, the great sign of man's hope, in a dynamic process of self-realization and commitment to the world community.[13]

The Divinisation of the Believer in the Worshipping Community

Through the seasons and feasts of the year, the Church provides a bountiful sharing in the mystery of the divinisation of the creation dramatically revealed by Paul in his letter to the Romans:

> The whole creation waits with eager expectation for God's children to be revealed.... The whole created universe is groaning in all its parts as if in the pangs of childbirth. And we also to whom the Spirit is given as the firstfruits of the harvest to come, are groaning inwardly while we wait for God to make us His children and set our whole being free..[14]

Just before this Paul had described the experience of the Spirit as a joining of the Spirit of God with our spirit to make us aware that we are God's children. Paul does not base the faith of the Christian on such an experience, but he is ready to appeal to it, as corroborative evidence for the believer who has enjoyed it. Such a believer is inwardly possessed with a sense of the nearness, the love and unfailing care of God, so that he is moved from within to cry out, Father! And this does not do away with the faith and hope which are constitutive of the Christian being. It is described as a foretaste of the future, but also as something for which we have still to wait patiently. It is nevertheless very real, as it bears fruits even in this life: the harvest of the spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, gentleness, truthfulness, humility and self-control. More mysteriously still it manifests itself in the believer's weakness experienced in a very special way at prayer. When he does not know how to pray properly the Spirit pleads for him through inarticulate groans, with sighs that are beyond words.

Such an experience is often seen in the Western Catholic tradition as the privilege of a few, designated as mystics, who experience here and now God's presence and the responding love that it stirs up in their whole being. But such mysticism is firmly rooted in the Bible. It can clearly be traced back to the great prophets, to saint John and saint Paul and to Jesus Himself in the Gospel, as when filled with joy by the Holy Spirit He cries out: I bless You, Father..., and confesses His privileged union with Him. In spite of this, mysticism continues to be considered as the privilege of some towering personalities of the past, a Gregory the Great, a Bernard of Clairvaux, Ruusbroec and Eckhart, John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila. The West's restraint in the use of symbolism in the liturgy and its predominant inclination towards logic and reason resulting in making dogma and ethics major components of the Church's prayer life may be responsible, at least partly, for the loss of this sense of divinisation in the life of the believers. Indeed, divinisation is by no means a windfall. As we have seen, it is the revealed purpose of the Incarnation:

> He put on Himself our humanity
> to clothe us in the garment of Divinity.

It is the harvest of the Holy Spirit in us. When we remember how Paul in the eighth chapter of the Letter to the Romans equates, the Spirit of God within and Christ within you, we find another corroboration of the divinisation of the believer, so emphatically asserted by him also in his Letter to the Galatians: It is no longer I who live, it is Christ who lives in me.

Now, it is this mystery which is the very purpose of the worship of the Church, the celebration of her prayer and her sacraments. In the Eastern Churches the sacraments are called mysteries. This points to God's activity in them, through the signs and symbols. During the celebration, the Holy Spirit is repeatedly called to act.

The Church contemplates this mystery of the merging of the Divine with the human in terms of bold realism:

> The Word of God... takes flesh for the sake of our flesh,
> unites Himself with an intelligent soul,
> flesh and Spirit, the Spirit deifying the flesh.....
> Astonishing mingling together between the Deity
> and the corporeity of the flesh. He partakes of our flesh
> that we may assume the riches of the Godhead.[15]

In the Church's worship it is the whole community of the believers which shares in the mysteries. The Church not only contemplates but re-enacts the mysteries, making the participants partakers of the saving actions of Christ in their sacramental fulfilment. In contrast with Paul's austere vision and language, the Church expresses herself in real oriental style with profuse and striking imagery as well as richness of thought, but all along with a rare elevation of expression and content. At His baptism Jesus leaves in the waters of the river His garment of immortality, that those who receive baptism may henceforward be clothed with Divinity and the Creation have its thirst quenched. Hence the Church offers praise to the Father who sent His Son to the river Jordan that, from the water, He might draw for her a vesture of fire and Spirit, and clothe her in the garment of glory:

> God the Word, Beloved Son of the Father, who
> descended from heaven softly life the rain and were
> seen by the river in open manifestation;

> Resplendent One whose rays of light remove the darkness from the world and who by the manifest splendour of Your Economy give light to the whole world...
> You who are without need were baptized in the river and You left there the garment of immortality for those who were naked, that they might be clothed in the garment of Divinity.
> Today, indeed, the glorious river has been enriched, which brings forth wondrous spiritual sons who shine like stars in heaven...
> Today is accomplished what David said: Deep calls the deep, that they may be blessed by the waters of baptism of the Saviour.
> Today the thirst of the creation is quenched when the Lord of the waters is manifested by the river and cries out that all who thirst be satisfied by Him.[16]

Though the sharing in God's life is truly fulfilled sacramentally, the Church continues to pray for obtaining the grace of the right disposition. For such a divine gift demands a living faith. Thus only, does she hope to be found worthy of a place at the right hand of her Saviour at the consummation of time:

> Lord, open our hearts and enlighten us through the Holy Spirit and raise our thoughts to Your mysteries that we may be ready to celebrate the feasts of Your Economy with clear and joyful hearts..... Grant that we may always receive Your Word with a faith free from all doubt. And while we celebrate with joy the festivals of Your Economy, make us worthy to be called at Your right hand at Your second coming.[17]

In all this she truly witnesses to an inner experience of the mysteries and expects from it a renewal of her life:

> The fire of Your love incites us to praise Your Epiphany.
> Truly astounding, it floods with light those who contemplate it.
> The splendour of the mystery takes hold of us,
> as we contemplate Your Epiphany, O You who were pleased,
> to manifest Yourself in a body from a daughter of David.[18]

For the liturgical celebration is not merely prayer and divine service, it is truly the life of the Church, as life comes to her from her Saviour whenever she celebrates His great works for our salvation. Thus, also, the community of believers hears the Word of God not as mere teaching but,

as Jesus Himself declared at Nazareth, as a proclamation of fulfilment and, in our Churches, as the re-enactment of this fulfilment, drawing all those who receive the Word into the dynamism of the saving mysteries. Morning and evening, on Sundays and feast days, the proclamation of the Gospel is highly evocative. It makes the voice of Christ resound in the assembly as that of the Risen Christ appearing to His disciples: Peace be with you! Jesus is acclaimed for the salvation He brings, and the Gospel is announced as the message of life proclaiming life and salvation to the world. While hearing the Word of God the assembly is renewed through faith in His love, revealed and communicated through its proclamation. It thus experiences salvation. He who believes has eternal life.[19]

But the assembly is also nourished by the teachings of the fathers and doctors. In the midst of the often heated controversies of the first centuries that led to a more articulate understanding and right formulation of the faith, they have very successfully vindicated for the believers the capacity and right of divinisation as the work of the Holy Spirit in them. This is how they understood John 1:12-13: To all who receive Him, who believe in His Name, He gives the power to become children of God... the offspring of God Himself. It is in the liturgical celebration that the divinisation is sown in the heart of the believers and rooted and it grows and bears fruits: a new heart, spiritual perception, new life, a new creation.

These teachings have become the marrow of the Syrian liturgy, communicating to the people who celebrate it, a quite remarkable, divine experience, even today. As they confess their faith in the Lord, and sing praise for the wonders He has accomplished in their favour, and celebrate the eternal espousals of the Lamb, they take a new awareness of their being raised as children of God, under the guidance and through the workings of the Holy Spirit. They feel they are on the march toward the full revelation of the divine sonship, and in the liturgy they are given a foretaste of it. As it has been said: It is in the liturgy that the people of God as a whole benefit from the priesthood of its members and 'lives of God', through the workings of the Holy Spirit who unceasingly makes them to be reborn, to be nourished, to be renewed, and who multiplies them through the Holy Mysteries.[20]

The Prayer of Asian Churches

Our prayer is generally and rightly described as the prayer of the Syrian Churches. But it will not be out of place to expatiate here on what

has already been mentioned in the preface to the first volume, that these prayers represent much more than present day Syria. Most of the Christians in the West—and it is not very different in India—know the Christian East only in its Byzantine form. Yet it has become clear from the rediscovery of the Syriac tradition made this last century that three worlds went into the making of the Christian Church, three cultures, three visions and expressions of truth, the Aramaic or Syriac, the Hellenistic, and the Latin. And each of them developed its own world-view starting from the experience of the divine events of the Incarnation and the Resurrection of the Word of God. The creative centre of the Syriac Christian Orient is first of all Jerusalem, the mother Church, but with her the Churches of Antioch and Edessa. These two were found at the starting point of, and on the great road from the Mediterranean Sea to India and China. The foundation of these Churches was made illustrious by apostles like James, Peter and Thomas. Later great names are, Aphrahat the Sage of Persia, and Ephrem the Syrian, who exercised their ministry on the border of the Roman and Persian empires. The boundaries of these Churches extended all over West Asia from the Mediterranean Sea in the Persian Gulf and deep into Persia. They reached out to India with the apostle Thomas, and later with emigrants seeking refuge from the persecution of King Sapor, and again when Islam established itself in Persia.

East Syrian monks brought the faith to the eastern shores of China some forty years only after the arrival of the Benedictine monks sent by Gregory the Great to carry the faith to England. Their leader, A-lo-pen, was given a cordial welcome by Emperor T'ai Tsung. China was then in one of the most glorious epochs of its history perhaps the wealthiest realm of the planet. In succeeding years Christian monasteries were founded, Christian literature in Chinese was produced and a metropolitanate was created for China. As attested by the Pillar of Hsiang Fu, the capital of T'ai Tsung, and other documents unearthed these last hundred years, Christianity was well established in China and even flourishing until it was wiped out following an imperial edict directed primarily against Buddhism, which also included Christianity in its proscription. It was known there as the Luminous Religion. Liturgical hymns which have been recovered with these relics, while using characteristic Chinese thought-patterns, with Buddhist undertones, still breathe forth the poetic theology of the school of Ephrem. Here are a few lines of a hymn on the Transfiguration of our Lord:

We all adore You, O Saviour.
You are the Holy-One-Equal-to God.

You are the Merciful Father, the Aloha, Himself.

Your raiment is like the precious gem brighter than the sunniest Sun,
more resplendent than the brightest Moon.

Your powers lofty and majestic excel those of all saints and sages.
Your Glad Tidings, Your teachings of wonderful love
are sounding throughout the world like the Golden Bell.

You alone are the Holy One. You alone are equal to God Almighty.
You are King and Saviour.
Dwelling in the Divine Light of peerless effulgence.

You reign over us all from on high....
All the faithful of the congregation are united to adore You.
And to take a ride on the heavenly wheel of the Law
with You, in making return to the Great Law[21].

Here ends the Hymn of the Luminous Religion on the Holy-One-Equal-to-God, who leads the people to the truth and makes them return to the Law.

Though the expansion to India and across China was made by the East-Syrian or Chaldaen Church, her prayer, like that of her Western counterpart, is the fruit of the theology and mystagogy created, by Saint Ephrem the Syrian, before their division. These Churches were the first to break through the Jewish framework and to develop the prayer life of their communities. In fact, it is they who created Christian hymnody and brought it to a level which has never been surpassed or even equalled. It is now widely acknowledged that in this sphere of life the Syrian Churches had a decisive influence on all other Churches. Byzantine hymnody was born out of translations of Ephrem's hymns; it even preserved the rules of metrical composition fixed in Syriac hymnody by the number of syllables for each line. Further, the great Romanos and Cosmos and most of the Byzantine melodists hailed from the Churches of West Asia. The influence of Syriac hymnody was also felt very early in Latin Italy as attested by Saint Augustine in his Confessions:

> When Ambrose of Milan was persecuted by the Emperor, the believers kept vigil in the churches, in constant prayer. They introduced the practice of singing hymns and psalms in keeping with the usage of the Eastern Churches. And their example was followed by the Churches throughout the world.[22]

This refers to Saint Ephrem who, during the early years of Ambrose, in far away Mesopotamia, had composed hymns and made them to be sung

by the people, women and youth, to preserve the integrity of the faith. Even today the Ambrosian hymns remain the best of the Roman Breviary. Sozomenos, a Greek father of church history, praised the hymns of Ephrem for the excellence and beauty of the language, and for the liveliness and wisdom of the thoughts, above those of the Greek fathers. Closer to us, the Catholic Dictionary of Theology, London 1970, describes Ephrem as the greatest theologian of the patristic age and perhaps the only theologian poet to rank beside Dante Alighieri, the author of the Divine Comedy. Asian Christianity can rightly be proud of such a teacher.

Thus the prayers we offer here are truly prayers of the Churches of Asia. Not only do they celebrate Christ's work of salvation which was accomplished in Asia, the saints also here associated with him are Asian saints- with the exception of Francis of Assisi, the universal and most Christ-like saint, and Francis Xavier, the greatest missionary sent from the West to these parts of the world. But above all they are the gems of Asian Christian theology, liturgy and spirituality. Father Louis Bouyer, one of the most eminent Catholic liturgists of our time, writing on the Syrian Anaphoras praises their Oriental character and holds them in the highest esteem: 'The West Syrian Eucharist can be considered as an ideal. Nowhere else has the traditional content of the Christian Eucharist been expressed with such fulness and in such satisfying framework.... an unfailing logical unity, continuity of development and an impeccable trinitarian schema.[23]

There is another important feature recommending our prayer for the Churches of Asia where the Latin liturgy has been introduced by the missionaries long ago and is now spreading more and more widely and exclusively. The West has recently come to discover and to acknowledge that while exporting their own culture the rich are generally deculturing the poor, by not letting them grow into their own culture or according to their innate potentialities. If this is true of industrialisation and consumerism, of education and communications, how much more so will it be when we touch on matters of the heart, as when we import wholesale Western patterns of prayer and worship. It is true that the present liturgical renewal benefits from the use of the vernacular and some regional adaptations are permitted, yet the whole liturgical reform effected at Rome after Vatican II has been conducted on the principles of critical historicity, dogmatic clarity and time-conscious brevity. Are these really suited to the Oriental ethos? Will they help to stir up the longings and groanings that nourish true prayer or to give the insights which the Gospel and the mysteries of Christ should evoke in the depth of the

hearts of the believers and then be given expression in worship in spirit and in truth?

Eastern liturgies as a whole and the Syrian liturgy in particular, like the people of Asia themselves, have a deep grounding in Nature. For Saint Ephrem Nature and the Holy Scriptures are the two great witnesses to God, we could almost say his two mediators:

> Look and see how Nature and Scripture are yoked together for the Husbandman (the Vinedresser of John15:1). Once Nature and Scripture have prepared the land, they sow in it, the land of the heart, new commandments so that it may bear fruit. Praise for the Lord of Nature. Glory to the Lord of Scripture.

Everything in Scripture and in Creation is to the eye of faith a pointer to the Creator:

> Wherever you turn your eyes, there is God's symbol.
>
> Whatever you read you will find His types.[24]

Ephrem finds himself constantly in a state of wonder as he ponders over the Creation and the Scriptures, both brought alive and constantly made new by the ever present Spirit. Both in their own way reveal to man the mystery of the Creator and Saviour. In contrast with this, in the West, Nature is in the process of being totally subdued by man. Is it not inherent in the methodology of economics that dominate the affluent world to ignore man's dependence on Nature? In Asia, on the contrary people remain deeply involved in its rhythms and much exposed to its uncertainties. Their lives continue to depend almost exclusively on her. The seasons of the year, night and day, morning and evening tightly encompass daily life. Rivers and wells, fields and forests are the places for meeting and of daily outings. We know that the God of Nature is not yet the God of faith. Yet cosmic awareness is the seed of a distinctive religious sensitivity. The celebration of the Mysteries of Salvation without involvement with Nature leaves a void in Asia. The believer uncovers a dimension of his own interiority in communion with Nature. In pondering over his cosmic fellowship he fosters a sense of awe as well as of oneness. The power of Nature's symbols like earth and sea, light and darkness, fire, wind and astral spaces perceived in the technologico-consumerist world as a matter of conquest, tourism or sports continues to shape and animate his inner life.

The Ecclesiastical Year or Year of Grace

The reform of the liturgical year in the Roman rite following Vatican

II has been undertaken with a view to restoring the central place of Easter and of each Sunday of the year. The celebration of Easter is again the centre from which the prayer and life of the believer is renewed and the celebration of the Sunday has gained priority over other feasts. Yet this has been obtained at the cost of a rather drastic streamlining of all Sundays outside Advent and Lent, leaving the believer with a series of some thirty three Sundays of the year.

The Crown of the Year of the Syrian Churches has a more articulate structure, deeply theological also and well preserved to this day. We like to describe it as a crown of great beauty. Quite a few variants have been used in the course of the centuries[25]. The one we have adopted consists of seven seasons of seven weeks each, occasionally eight, preceded by two Sundays of the Church: Dedication and Renovation. As in the Semitic tradition, the figure seven is sacred in the Syrian Churches. Not only the seven days of the week but also seven weeks make up mystical units of time, often used by monks and hermits for periods of greater solitude, silence and prayer . In the liturgy seven seasons of seven weeks provide the perfect framework for the celebration of the Economy of Salvation.

The ecclesiastical year begins on the Sunday nearest to the last day of October. It is the Sunday of the Dedication of the Church followed by the Sunday of the Renovation of the Church. The seven seasons of the year, of seven weeks each, are:

1. The Annunciation of the Lord's coming.
2. The Nativity, Baptism and Epiphany of our Lord.
3. The Fast of our Lord, His Passion, Death and Resurrection.
4. The Season of the Resurrection concluding with Pentecost.
5. The Apostles, their mission to the world.
6. The Transfiguration of our Lord on the Mountain.
7. The Cross.

Two major cycles stand out, that of the Resurrection-Pentecost, and of the Nativity-Epiphany, each one with its season of preparation in prayer and fast. The Feast of the Baptism and Epiphany, known also as the Feast of Lights, comes as the Great Theophany: the revelation of the Blessed Trinity and of the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, the Uniquely Beloved Son of the Father whose voice is heard, while the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove. The whole season celebrates the mystery of God's forgiveness of man's sin, through the humiliation of His Son in the waters of the river. The Son is manifested as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

The Resurrection and Pentecost, preceded by the Fast, Passion and Death of our Lord, are the heart of the Divine Dispensation, of Christ's work of salvation.

After Pentecost, the Great Theophany of the Holy Spirit, it is the mystery of the Church which is celebrated. This embraces three more seasons. First the season of the Apostles with its preparatory fast with prayer, from June 16 to 28 and culminating in the feasts of Saints Peter and Paul on June 29, and Saint Thomas on July 3. The season of the Transfiguration of our Lord makes us again witnesses of a great theophany, this time on a holy mountain. It is centered around the feast on August 6. The last season is that of the Cross. It follows the Exaltation of the Cross on September 14, as the mystery recapitulating the whole Economy of the Lord's Salvation, and anticipating the consummation of time.

The Present Volume

The present book begins with the two Sundays of the Church. There we have before us, from the beginning, the mystery of the Church, as the Bride of Christ whom He prepares for His marriage festival, by teaching her how to walk in His footsteps. The Sundays that follow commemorate the divine interventions that prepared the Nativity of our Lord:

The Annunciation to Zechariah.
The Annunciation to the Mother of God.
The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth.
The Birth of John the Baptist.
The Revelation to Joseph.
The Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord.

Two Sundays follow His Nativity. The cycle of the Epiphany joined with the Nativity has been restored by us in its integrity, in order to bring out the mystery of the Theophany with its revelation of the divinisation of man that prepares the Church for the celebration of the Lord's Passover and Pentecost. We have left out the Fast of the Ninevites and the three Sundays of prayer for the departed assigned to Fridays in the *Penqitho*. The feast of the Baptism and Epiphany of our Lord originated in the East even before the Nativity of our Lord was celebrated in Rome. It was then one of the three great festivals of the Church, with Easter and Pentecost. Its season can extend over eight Sundays, depending on the date of Easter.

The calendar feasts or fixed feasts are divided into three groups according to their excellence: the Feasts of our Lord, the Feasts of the Mother of God and the Feasts of the Saints. The present volume includes the following feasts.

1. Feasts of our Lord.

December	24	The Day before the Nativity of our Lord.
December	25	The Nativity of our Lord in the flesh.
January	1	The Naming of Jesus.
January	6	The Baptism and Epiphany of our Lord.
February	2	The Entrance of our Lord into the Temple.

2. Feasts of the Mother of God.

November	21	The Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple
December	8	The Conception of the Mother of God.
December	26	The Praises of the Mother of God.
January	15	The Mother of God, Mother of Seeds.

3. Feasts of Saints.

December	3	Francis Xavier, Missionary to Asia.
December	20	Ignatius the Fiery, Bishop and Martyr.
December	27	The Infants of Bethlehem.
January	7	Praises of John the Baptist.
January	8	Stephen Firstborn of the Martyrs.
January	17	Anthony of Egypt and the Desert Fathers.
January	26	Robert, Alberic and Stephen, Cistercian Abbots
January	28	Ephrem the Syrian, Deacon of Nisibis and Doctor.
January	29	Translation of the Bones of Ignatius the Fiery.
February	19	Ephrem and Isaac, the Great Teachers of Prayer.

Within the major seasons we have days or seasons of fast and prayer, in preparation for the celebration of the major feasts:

Fast of the Nativity	:	December 1 to 25.
Fast of our Lord	:	Six weeks ending on Friday before Hosanna Sunday and followed by Passion Week.
Fast of the apostles	:	June 16 to 29.
Fast of the Assumption	:	August 1 to 15.

The great feasts of our Lord are generally followed by commemoration of saints associated with Him, His witnesses. Thus the Nativity of our Lord is followed immediately by the Praises of the Mother of God and the commemoration of the Infants of Bethlehem. The simple days which follow these commemorations, for eight days, are celebrated as Days after the Feast with their proper services, except of course on Sundays or major feasts.

December 28 to January 5: Days after the Nativity
January 9 to 14 : Days after the Epiphany.

The Structure of Our Services

1. Evening Prayer

Common Introductory Prayers: Hymn for the lighting of the Lamp or Doxology and Trisagion.

Opening Prayer, *slutho*, celebrating the mystery of the day.

Psalm of the Day and its Response, *eniono, qonuno* or *quroko.*

The four Evening Psalms: 141 , 142, 119 vv 105 to 112; and 117; and their Response.

The Eucharistic Prayer, *proemion* and *sedro*, a climax of each prayer service, a *berakha*, the biblical prayer par excellence: praise and thanksgiving concluded with petitions, a Eucharist of the Word.

Hymn, *qubolo* or *qolo* or *madrosho* or *sughitho.*
Prayer of Incense, *etro.*
Supplication Song, *bo'utho.*
Proclamation of the Gospel:
- Halleluia, *hullolo.*
- Introductory Acclamations: Responses and Announcements.
- Gospel Proclamation.
- Intercessions, *qoruzutho.*
- Prayer, *slutho.*

Trisagion.

2. Night Vigil

Common Introductory Prayers: Doxology and Trisagion

AWAKENING SERVICE
- Opening Prayer.
- Psalms of the Night: 134, 119 vv 169-176, and 117.
- Response, *m'irono.*

FIRST WATCH
- Psalm of the Day
- Response
- Eucharistic Prayer, *sedro*
- Hymn

SECOND WATCH
Acclamations: Blessed be the glory of the Lord...
Psalm of the Day
Response
Eucharistic Prayer, *sedro*
Hymn

THIRD WATCH
Acclamations: Blessed be the glory of the Lord...
Service of the Resurrection:
Common Response
Eucharistic Prayer, *sedro*
Hymn
Supplication Song, *bo'utho*

FOURTH WATCH: A Morning Prayer
Acclamations: Halleluia...Be compassionate...
Service of the Communion of Saints:
Mary's Song
Psalm 132: The Blessing of Unity.
Response: Remember Mary
Cosmic Praise: Psalms 148, 149, 150, 116
Praise to the Holy Trinity....

CONCLUSION
Supplication Song, *bo'utho*
Hymn of Saint Athanasius
Concluding Prayer, *slutho*: Lord Jesus Christ, do not close...
Trisagion

Our Translation

It was no scholarly purpose that prompted us to prepare this English translation of the *Penqitho*. As a monastic community, after the Second Vatican Council, we felt the need of celebrating the Prayer of the Church in the vernacular.

As we became familiar with the prayer tradition of the Syrian Churches we understood how the *Penqitho* came into existence. It was born of the desire to gather the great variety of pieces of the Sunday and festive offices: responses and hymns of various kinds and names, the actual prayers of the congregation and also the Bible readings. We also came to realize that the Syrian Churches always felt the need of renewing their liturgical compositions. They substituted new ones for the old, always preserving however the poetic metres, the tones and melodies, and also

this deeply biblical and cosmic inspiration which contributes so much to their beauty and their universal character. In fact during several centuries improvisations and free compositions were the general rule for the Eucharistic Liturgy. Hence the great number of Eucharistic Prayers or Anaphoras which have been preserved. [26]

Finally, though the *Penqitho* is the book of the prayer services of the Church, it is not a *Breviary* as this is known in the Roman Catholic Church for the private recitation of the Divine Office. The *Penqitho* was made for the use of the Churches where the prayer is celebrated according to the strength of the congregation and the time that can be set aside for it. While the structure of the prayer services is clearly indicated, a considerable amount of optional material is given. This leaves freedom to the leader to choose what he finds most suitable. This is repeatedly indicated in the text itself by phrases like these: *Another piece,* or *If it pleases the leader.* [27]

How have we exercised this liberty ? Our version of the *Penqitho* preserves the structure of our prayers. Which then are the changes that have been made? We have already dealt with this subject in some detail in the Introduction to the first volume of Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit, pp.9 to 12. Let us briefly mention here what concerns the *Penqitho.* We had to do away with a number of anti-semitic portions and provide substitutes for them. Regarding the responses to the psalms we have very often replaced the first one by a new one inspired by the psalm itself, with a view to bringing out the relationship of the psalm with the mystery celebrated. At the Evening Prayer we have expanded the *hullolo* which introduces the Proclamation of the Gospel, usually by adding a counterpart taken from the New Testament. We have also considerably expanded the Intercessions, in the light of the signs of our time, especially the new consciousness of the oneness of the human family and of our relationship with the other living faiths.

We have occasionally retouched older pieces, in the same light, especially the prayers. We have also composed new pieces. Further we have introduced some new feasts or upgraded old ones, taking our inspiration from the writings of the saints themselves or from reliable life testimonies. Such is the case in the present volume of the Feast of the Naming of Jesus, Ignatius the Fiery, Anthony the Great, Robert, Alberic and Stephen, Ephrem and Isaac the Teachers of Prayer, Francis Xavier. We have also given a more biblical substance to the weekly prayer of the Season of the Annunciation, mainly by drawing on the Prophets. Finally we have provided a fuller celebration of the Days after the Nativity and Epiphany of our Lord, extending the festive celebration to a full octave of days.

How has this New Edition been revised?

Concerning the Introduction, we had first to make good the observations of Fr. P. Yousif in his review published in Orientalia Christiana Periodica, 49, 1983, p. 220, where he remarked that the expansion to India and across China was made by the East-Syrian wing or Chaldean Church. It is to them that the inculturation in China is to be attributed.

As for the prayers, their celebration by our community, for another sixteen years, has enabled us to make a careful revision of the whole text, with a considerable number of amends and emendations. The most significant of these were made in the Ferial Days in the Season of the Annunciation which has been considerably enriched. Here new hymns, *qolos*, as well as, *madroshos,* have been added, both at the Evening Prayer and the Night Vigil. Similar amends and additions have been made throughout the Season of the Baptism of our Lord for which the *Penqitho* offers much material but leaves it to the leader to make the selection for every particular celebration. The beautiful Supplication Song of the feast used both at the Evening Prayer and the Night Vigil—as well as on some Sundays—has been amended, while a remarkable hymn in the form of a dialogue, *sughito*, on Matthew 3:14-15, replaces the previous one in the Second Watch of the feast. Similarly several new Supplication Songs have been introduced in the services of the Sundays of this Season as well as in those of the Ferial Days after the Baptism.

Finally, when we were preparing the publication of the following volume of Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit: The Season of the Fast of our Lord, His Passion, Death and Resurrection, we soon realised that our initial plan to indicate the Bible lessons of all the celebrations of one feast, was too ambitious and beyond our scope. We therefore restricted ourselves in this revised edition to indicate the Bible lessons of the services of which we offer the translation.

An Evaluation

We remain very conscious of the imperfections of this English translation of poetic Aramaic texts. Yet we believe that our selection made out of this treasure trove is truly representative of the riches of our prayer. The translation itself though done *in prayer* and *con amore* cannot claim to match the beauty of the language of the original and often fails to render its biblical and theological insights. Yet with all these imperfections our hearts overflow with gratitude for having been called to celebrate this prayer and to feed our meditation on it. We offer thanks to the Lord for sustaining us in persevering to the end of a translation running through some 4000 pages, 16cm x 22, one vast, extended

meditation on His Economy of Salvation. We express our gratitude to Dom Bede Griffiths who initiated the translation and completed the Evening Prayer when he was assisting this young foundation. His work was a literal translation. We took over from him to make his translation fit for celebration. We further translated the Night Vigil. We offer thanks above all to the community of Kurisumala that celebrated the prayer all along these thirty eight years, first in Syriac and later in English.

As it is often observed, even by those who come to us for the first time, the style of these prayers is truly oriental, yet simple and direct, free from philosophical considerations. We trust that the simple believer and devotee will discover here the precious pearls of a spiritual tradition born and grown in Asia, whose features can be identified as follows.

1. A prayer rooted in the Holy Scriptures, with an astonishingly fruitful merging of the two testaments, resulting in a vivid perception of the newness of Christ's message yet entirely growing out of the History of Salvation of God's people.

2. A revelation of the oneness of the spiritual world and of the world of creation, perceived by the inner eye and experienced as *homeness* at once in this world and in that which is beyond.

3. An unceasing epiphany of God's love responded to with earnestness and a directness inspired by the daily lives of the believers as well as of the Christian communities.

4. Such a response to God's love finds its first expression in repentance and self-denial, as a means of partaking in the death of Christ, yet they are also the gate of life in Him.

5. A deep sense of the Communion of Saints rooted in a close bond of unity with the dead, irradiated by a luminous faith in the Resurrection.

We further hope that the theologian may also profit from this contemplation of the Mysteries of Salvation and perceive their relevance for modern man. He may even be led to a deeper reflection on the nature of theological expression itself. As Hugo Rahner has written :

> Wherever the Fathers unfold their theology with its veils of imagery, we discover a wealth of symbols and of truths clothed in symbols, which could give new life to our modern dogmatic expressions, perhaps still all too much dominated as they are by Apologetics and Canon Law. The world of imagery found in the symbols of the Church which the theology of the first ten centuries has preserved for us could bring about a renovation of our thinking about the Church, large areas of which have, from a dogmatic point of view, become sterile.[28]

Dom Bede Griffiths' Review

The renewal of the Liturgy, which was initiated by the Second Vatican Council, requires a 'return to the sources' of liturgical tradition, a rediscovery of the riches of Christian prayer to be found not only in the Western Churches, whether Latin or Greek, but also in the Syrian Churches, which, as Father Francis Acharya points out in the introduction to this volume, represent the Church of Asia. At one time the Syrian Churches extended right across Asia from Palestine to India and China, and they have left behind them a liturgical tradition which is perhaps the richest to be found in the whole history of the Church.

In this volume Father Acharya has undertaken to translate a major portion of the *Penqitho*, the Book of Prayer for the Sundays and Feasts of the Year. This is a vast undertaking- there are still two volumes to follow- but it is a labour of love, which is of considerable importance for the Church in India. While translating into dignified and at the same time very readable English the main body of the prayer, he has not hesitated to introduce changes, so as to bring it into line with the mind of the Church to-day and to make it meaningful as a form of prayer which can be used as a living prayer to-day. It is thus both a work of solid scholarship, presenting in English a body of liturgical texts, which have never been translated into English before, but also a service to the Church as a whole in making known some of the treasures of Christian prayer which she has inherited from the past.

This work is of considerable importance, as we have said, for the Church in India, since this is an authentic Asian Liturgy, which is still preserved in the Syrian Churches in India. Father Acharya is rather negative in his assessment of the renewal of the liturgy in the Latin rite, but I think that all would agree that if we are to evolve a genuine Indian rite in the course of time corresponding to the needs of the Church in India to-day, the Syrian liturgy will have to take an important place in its development. Meanwhile here is an abundance of riches on which Christian prayer can be fed, while we seek to respond to what the Holy Spirit is calling the Church in India to do, in order to develop an Indian Liturgy which will be at once deeply rooted in the Bible, profoundly contemplative and answering to the needs of the new India, which is emerging from the chaos of the present time.[29]

The Common Prayers

When we come together for prayer, we stand with our face turned towards the east. Folding our hands on our breast and recollecting our thoughts, we make the sign of the Cross saying the Doxology.

Doxology

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
And on us weak and sinful servants,
mercy and compassion in both worlds for ever and ever. Amen.

Trisagion

Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord.
God of all cosmic forces.
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who has come and is to come
in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The four lines that follow: "Holy are You"... are said three times, each time with the sign of the Cross and a prostration, replaced on Sundays and Feastdays by a profound bow.

Holy are You, O God.
Holy are You the Strong.
Holy are You the Deathless who were crucified for us.
Have mercy on us.

Then standing upright we raise our hands while looking up and we say:

Lord, have mercy on us.
Lord, have pity and mercy on us.
Lord, receive our service and our prayers and have mercy on us.

Glory to You, O God. Glory to You, Creator.
Glory to You, Christ the King,
who have compassion on Your sinful servants. Bless Lord!

Here we bow, make the sign of the Cross, and raising our hands and looking up, we say:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your Name,
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today the bread we need.
Forgive us our sins and offences,
as we forgive those who have offended against us.
Do not let us enter into temptation
and deliver us from the Evil One.
For Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, our Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit
of your womb, our Lord Jesus Christ.
O Lady Mary, Virgin Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and always and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Profession of Faith

At the end of the services, especially at the end of the Service of Prayer for Protection before the Night.

We believe in one true God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, only son of God, who was born of the Father before all worlds; light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made and equal in essence to His Father, by whom all things were made. For us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and became man. He was crucified for us in the days of Pontius Pilate and suffered and died and was buried. He rose on the third day according to His will and ascended to heaven and sits at the right hand of His Father and will come again in His great glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom has no end. We believe in one Life-giving and Holy Spirit, who is the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the Prophets and Apostles, and in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. We confess that there is one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. And we look for the resurrection of the dead and the new life in the world to come. Amen.

The Common Evening Prayers

Lamp Lighting Hymn or Trisagion

The response after each stanza is: Holy and blessed Jesus Christ!

Joy-giving light of the holy glory of the
Heavenly and Immortal Father!

We gather at the close of the day beholding the evening light.
We praise the Father through the Son, in the Holy Spirit of God.

At all times, O Lord, You are worthy of praise, with holy songs.
Son of God, Giver of life, the world gives glory to You.

Doxology Glory be to the Father.....p.1

Opening Prayer *(according to each day)*

Evening Psalms 141(140);142 (141);119(118):105-112;117(116).

We call upon You, Lord, hear us.
Give heed to our words and answer us.

Let our prayer be like incense in Your sight
and the raising of our hands like the evening oblation.
Lord, set a guard before our mouths,
keep watch at the door of our lips,
that our hearts may not turn to evil words
and we may not indulge in deeds of wickedness.

We will not sit at the table of the wicked.
Let the just man teach us, let him reprove us,
but the oil of the wicked shall not anoint our heads.
Our prayer is against their evil doing...

We lift up our eyes to You, Lord.
We put our trust in You, do not reject us.
Keep us from the hand of the proud
who have laid snares for us...

With all our voice we cry to You, Lord.
With all our voice we make supplication.
We pour out our affliction before You,
we lay bare our brokenness.
Our spirit is in the dark, but You know our paths.

On the way we have to walk
they have hidden snares for us.
We look to the right, and see no one who knows us.
There is no way, and there is not one who cares for us.
We cry out to You, Lord, and we say: You are our refuge,
You are our portion in the land of the living.

Hear our supplication, we are in distress.
Deliver us from our persecutors,
they are too strong for us.
Lead us forth from prison that we may praise Your name.
Your just ones are waiting for us
until You give us Your reward.

Your word is a lamp to our feet
and a light upon our path.
We have sworn and have determined
to keep Your holy decrees.
We are greatly brought low, Lord,
give us life according to Your word.
Be pleased, Lord, with the words of our lips
and teach us Your decrees.

Our lives are always in Your hands,
we do not forget Your law.
The wicked have set traps for us,
but we do not stray from Your commands.
We treasure up Your testimonies.
Truly they are the joy of our hearts.
Incline our hearts to keep Your commands, for ever, in truth.

Praise the Lord, all you nations.
Praise Him, all you peoples.
Great is His goodness for us.
Truly, the Lord's goodness is for ever.

To You belongs the praise, O God. Halleluia.

Glory be to the Father..... From age to age...

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro, Initial Acclamations and Responses*

Deacon Let us lift up our hearts.

Community We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader Let us offer praise to the Lord and beg for the mercy of His grace.

Community Compassionate Lord, we praise Your wonderful name, show us Your mercy.

Leader Praise, thanksgiving, glory, honour and exaltation continually and without ceasing, at all times may we be worthy to offer...

(Conclusion) To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of .. and at all times and seasons and hours and moments of the days of our life for ever. Amen.

Proclamation of The Gospel *On Sundays and Feasts*

Hullolo Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.... *according to the feast*

Deacon In silence and awe and reverence let us listen to the proclamation of the living word of God which is read to us from the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader Peace be with you all!

People May the Lord God make us worthy of it!

Reader The holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the message of life according to the Apostle Matthew or John or the Evangelist Mark or Luke, proclaiming life and salvation to the world.

People Blessed is He who has come and is to come in the name of the Lord. Glory to the Father who sent Him for our salvation. Adoration to the Spirit who leads us to the fulness of truth.

Reader In the time of- the Annunciation *or* Nativity *or* Baptism *or* Fast *or* Resurrection of- our Lord God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the Word of life who was God and took flesh of the Holy Virgin Mary, these things came to pass.

People We believe and confess it.

Reader *After completing the reading:* Peace be with you all! *And he kisses the book.*

Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
do not close the door of Your mercy on our faces.
Lord, we confess that we are sinners, be gracious to all.

Your love made You descend from Your place to us.
Lord, by whose death our death was ended,
be gracious to the whole world.

Trisagion *In conclusion of the service*

Holy are You, O God. Holy are You , the Strong.
Holy are You the Deathless who were crucified for us.
Have mercy on us.

This is said three times, with prostration each time, replaced on Sundays and Feastdays by a profound bow: Holy are You, O God.

Lord, have mercy on us. Lord, have pity and mercy on us.
Lord, receive our service and our prayers and have mercy on us.

Glory to You, O God. Glory to You, Creator.
Glory to You, Christ the King,
who have compassion on Your sinful servants. Bless, Lord!

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name,
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us today the bread we need.
Forgive us our sins and offences
as we forgive those who have offended against us.
Do not let us enter into temptation
and deliver us from the Evil One.
For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, our Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit
of your womb, our Lord Jesus Christ.
O Lady Mary, Virgin Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and always and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Common Prayers for the Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.....P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord..P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer

Awaken us, Lord, from our sleep in the sloth of sin,
that we may praise Your Wakefulness,
O Wakeful One who do not sleep.
Give life to our death in the sleep of death and corruption,
that we may adore Your compassion,
Living One who do not die.
And make us worthy to praise You and bless You in holiness,
with the glorious companies of the angels on high
that You may be praised and blessed on earth as in heaven,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
now and always and for ever. Amen.

Night Psalms 134 (133); 119(118):169-176;117(116)

Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you who serve the Lord.

Bless, Lord! You who stand in the house of the Lord
through the watches of the night.

Lift up your hands toward the sanctuary
and bless the Lord.

May the Lord bless you from His Holy Mountain,
He who made heaven and earth.

Lord, let our praise enter into Your presence
and give us life by Your word.
Let our supplication enter into Your sight, Lord,
and set us free by Your word.

May our lips pour forth Your word
on account of the holiness of all Your commands.

May our tongues repeat Your praise
because You taught us Your commands.
Let Your hand come to our help
because we take our delight in Your law.

We long for Your salvation
and we meditate on Your law.
Let us live that we may praise You
and Your decrees will give us help.

We have gone astray like the lost sheep,
come in search of Your servants
for we have not forgotten all Your commands.

Praise the Lord, all you nations.
Praise Him, all you peoples.
Great is His goodness for us.
Truly, the Lord's goodness is for ever.

To You belongs the praise, O God. Halleluia.

Glory be to the Father..... From age to age...

Acclamations *Before the II and III watches*

Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place for ever. (Ez.3:12)
Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place for ever.
You are blessed, Lord, to You be glory from Your place for ever.

Holy and glorious Trinity, have mercy on us.
Holy and glorious Trinity, have mercy on us.
Holy and glorious Trinity, have compassion and mercy on us.

You are holy and glorious for ever.
You are holy and glorious for ever.
You are holy and Your name is blessed for ever.

Glory to You, our Lord.
Glory to You, our Lord.
Glory to You, our hope for ever. Bless, Lord!

Our Father in heaven.... Hail Mary, full of grace....

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... as above, P.8

A SERVICE FOR THE RESURRECTION

A Common Service on Sundays and Feastdays

Common Response

Give rest, Lord, to our departed in Your abode of light.
Give rest to them, Lord, and be gracious to all.
Forgive and pass over the faults of us and them.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the God who raises the dead and gives life to them with a gesture of His power and shakes from their faces the dust which darkens their eyes that they may behold His glory. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Lord Jesus Christ, at that hour when You shall appear at the end of time, and the sign of Your victory shall be revealed, when the light of Your countenance shall shine upon the good and Your fear shall fall upon the wicked...do not remember our faults. We beseech You, Lord, make us and our departed, and all the people of the Holy Church worthy to exalt You with the Wakeful Ones, to praise You with the Fiery Ones, to worship You with the Saints and to be gladdened by the sight of Your Godhead, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

With the sons of Your right hand, Lord,
may our fathers and brothers take their pleasure.
May they hear Your sweet voice which calls and says:
Come, enter, inherit the Kingdom with the saints.

Isaiah cried to the Messiah, the Rising Sun,
who awakens the dead and makes them to rise from their graves:
They will open their wings like doves and fly to meet You.
Blessed is He who has come and will come. Glory to His Name.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Praise to You by whose decree Death reigned
and by whose resurrection the Serpent is defeated.
Praise ascends to You, Lord, from every mouth.
From every place You gather together the dust of Adam.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The dead who by Your death receive the pledge of life
will praise You, Lord, from within the grave.
They will shake off the dust and be clothed with glory.
On the day of the resurrection
they will return to the heights, their true dwelling place.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Renew, O Full of Mercy, Your creatures by the resurrection.

Your servants and Your worshippers who have slept in Your hope.

O Lord, give rest and pardon to the dead
who have slept in Your hope and await Your coming.

Give rest to those in the grave, O Heavenly King,
and multiply forgiveness for the departed believers.

At the side of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, O Lord,
make to rest Your servants who have slept in Your hope.

Glory to Christ who calls the dead
and they rise without corruption and sing praise.

Body, soul and spirit will awake and cry together:
Blessed is He who has come, and will come and raise the dead.

FOURTH WATCH

A Daily Morning Service, marking the end of the Night Vigil, the sanctuary lamps are lighted and the curtain is drawn aside.

SERVICE OF THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia, glory to You, O God. (3 times)

Be compassionate towards us in Your mercy, O God of compassion.
In our sacrifices and our prayers
we make memory of our fathers who taught us,
while they were alive, to be children of God.
Son of God, raise them up in the Heavenly Kingdom,
with the just and the righteous,
in the world which does not pass away.

Mary's Song of Thanksgiving

And Mary said: My soul glorifies the Lord.
My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.
He has looked on His servant in her nothingness.
Henceforth all generations will count me blessed.

The Mighty One has done great things for me.
His name is holy and His graciousness
is from age to age on those who revere Him.

He has conquered by His mighty arm
and has scattered the proud-hearted.
He has brought down the mighty from their thrones
but He has lifted up the humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things
but sent the rich away empty.
He has helped Israel His servant
remembering His graciousness,
as He had promised to our forefathers,
to Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father... From age to age....

Psalm 133 (132)

How good and beautiful it is for brothers to live in unity.

It is like oil poured on the head and on the beard,
poured on the beard of Aaron, even to the edge of his robe.

It is like the dew of Mount Hermon which comes down
on Jerusalem, the Holy Mountain, for it is from there
that the Lord gives His blessings and life for ever.

Glory be to the Father.... From age to age..

Response

Remember Mary, and may she help us by her prayers.

Remember all the saints and may they help us by their prayers.

Prophets, apostles and martyrs,
may your prayer always be with us.

Make us worthy, Lord, of the abode of Your martyrs
and the home where dwell Your friends.

O Compassionate One, full of Graciousness,
on the day of Your judgement, be gracious to all.

Because there, Lord, You promised Your blessings and life for ever.

Blessed is He whose mercy is never withheld
from the sinner who calls upon Him.

Lord, remember well the people of the Church of believers.

And make them stand at Your right hand,
on the day when Your Majesty appears.

At all times and seasons, Virgin Mother of God,
may your prayer be a stronghold for us.

By the prayers of Your saints, keep from us the Evil One,
who at all times lays snares for us.

Jesus, our Lord and our God,
may Your Cross be our shelter and our stronghold.

Jesus, Word of God, by Your Cross protect the living,
and pardon the dead in Your mercy.

On all the days of our life,
let us give thanks, adoration and praise
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

All merciful God, on the great day when You come,
raise us up at Your right hand.

You who have made us worthy to praise You,
make us worthy to inherit Your Kingdom.

May Your mercy be upon us, Lord.
O Lord of life and death, be gracious to all.

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Awake, you that sleep, and rise to sing praise.

The Cosmic Praise Psalms 148; 149; 150; 117(116)

Praise the Lord from the heavens.
Praise Him in the heights.
Praise Him, all His angels.
Praise Him, all His powers.

Praise Him, sun and moon.
Praise Him, all stars of light.
Praise Him, highest heaven
and the waters above the heaven.
Let them praise the name of the Lord.

He said a word and they were made.
He commanded and they were created.
He set them for ever
and gave them a law which shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord, all the earth,
sea creatures and all oceans,
fire and hail, snow and mist,
stormy winds that obey His word.

All mountains and hills,
all fruit trees and cedars,
all beasts and cattle,
creeping things and birds that fly in the air.

All earth's kings and peoples,
princes and rulers of the world,
young men and maidens,
old men and children,
let them praise the name of the Lord.

For He alone is exalted,
His praise is on earth and in heaven.
He exalts the strength of His people.
He is the praise of all believers,
of the people who draw near to Him.

Praise the Lord with a new praise.
Praise Him in the assembly of believers.
Let His people rejoice in their Maker.
Let their children be glad with their King.

Let them praise His name with tambourines and drums,
and sing to Him with their harps.
The Lord takes delight in His people.
He gives salvation to the poor.

The devotees find strength in the Glorious One.
They exalt Him and take their rest.
Let the praise of God be on their lips...
This is the glory of all believers.

Praise the Lord in His holy place.
Praise Him in the heavenly vault of His power.
Praise Him for His powerful deeds.
Praise Him for His infinite greatness.

Praise Him with the sound of the horn.
Praise Him with the lute and the harp.

Praise Him with the tambourine and the drum.
Praise Him with sweet melodies.
Praise Him with the clashing of cymbals.
Praise Him with the sound of the voice.
Let everything that breathes give praise to the Lord.

Praise the Lord, all you nations.
Praise Him, all you peoples.
Great is His goodness for us.
Truly, the Lord's goodness is for ever.

To You belongs the praise, O God. Halleluia.

Glory be to the Father.... From age to age....

Common Response

Praise to the Holy Trinity.
Praise to the Holy Trinity.
We praise the glorious Trinity,
eternal and everlasting.
To You belongs the praise, O God, at all times.

Supplication Song *As on each particular day.*

Hymn of Saint Athanasius *On Sundays and Festivals.*

As the angels and the archangels sing praise, like them we offer praise while we say at all times and in all seasons:

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth
peace, tranquillity and good hope among men.

We praise You, we bless You, we adore You,
we sing a hymn of praise to You.

We give thanks to You because of Your great glory,
Lord, our Creator, King of heaven, God the Father Almighty.

Lord God, Only Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit.

Lord God, Lamb of God and Word of the Father,
who take away the sin of the world, be gracious to all.

You who take away the sin of the world
incline Your ear to us and receive our prayers.

You who sit in glory at the right hand of Your Father,
have compassion on us and be gracious to all.

Because You only are holy, You only, Lord Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the Glory of God the Father. Amen.

At all times and on all the days of our life
we bless You and we praise Your name,
holy and blessed for ever, who is and remains for ever and ever.

Blessed are You, Lord, Upholder of all, God of our fathers,
Your name is blessed and glorified with praises, for ever and ever.

To You belongs glory, to You belongs praise,
to You belongs honour, God of all, Father of truth,
with the Son, the Only One, and the Life-giving Holy Spirit,
now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ.....P. 6.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God..... P. 6

MEDITATION

These Common Prayers and Psalms are a new translation from the original Syriac. The psalm numbers are those of the Peshitto. The numbers of the Vulgate are given in brackets.

Sunday
of the Dedication of the Church

The First Jewel of the Crown of the Year,
the Re-enactment of the Saving Economy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the lighting of the Lamp P...3

Doxology Glory be to the Father.....P...1

Opening Prayer

Lord God, make to dwell in Your Church unbroken peace and undisturbed tranquillity, and establish her immovably on You, Christ, the rock of truth. In Your graciousness make her one, beyond all divisions and disunity, as You are one with the Father and the Father with You, make her perfectly one, that the light of Your Gospel be made manifest to every creature, and we may offer praise and thanksgiving in joy and gladness to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 45(44):2; 11-18 My heart overflows with noble words...

Response[1]

Our hearts overflow with noble thoughts
in praise of the bride adorned with all comeliness,
blessed by God from all eternity.
The Son of the King desired her beauty.
He is her Lord, we all pay homage to Him.

The Word of God became flesh
to dignify humankind and share His life with us.
He lived among us and we saw His glory,
the glory of the Only Son of the Father full of truth and love.
And He sheds it on the countenance of His Church
whose radiance is the light of the nations.

You who are radiant with the light of Him who redeemed you
be burning with zeal for the knowledge of God
and ever walk in His footsteps, in obedience to the truth.
Rejoice mystically in the Lamb of God,
as the apostles and holy fathers have taught you, and cry:
Blessed are You who are the way, the truth and the life.

How fair and comely you are, Church of true believers,
Bride of Christ, your Spouse.
Your hair falls on your shoulders,
and on your neck is a necklace of gold.
You are adorned with the blood of the martyrs.
In you is the true doctrine of life.
You take your delight in the heavenly bread of God Most High.

Evening Psalms We call up on You, Lord, hear us.... P..3

Response

We celebrate the evening service.
We offer this spiritual service to You, Christ,
who in Your graciousness were pleased
to manifest Your love and compassion for us,
in Your Church redeemed by Your Cross.

Lord, our Lord, we beseech You, do not cast us away.
Do not reject us from Your presence
who in Your graciousness were pleased
to manifest Your love and compassion for us,
in Your Church redeemed by Your Cross.

Make to cease in Your Churches rivalries and disunity,
that peace and tranquillity may abound in them,
in every place, Lord, and strengthen them by Your Cross,
that in their assemblies they may praise You with joy.
Glory to You and to Him who sent You.

O Holy Church, sing glory to the Bridegroom who in His love
espoused you and saved you by His Cross of Life,
and placed in you His holy body and His blood,
the chalice of salvation in pardon for all believers.

King David in his psalms foretold you, O Church,
announcing that kings would come to admire your beauty.
The King who dwells in you is the great King for all eternity.
To Him all praise is due.

Eucharistic Prayer[2] *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise, thanksgiving, glory, honour and exaltation, continually and without ceasing, at all times may we be worthy to offer to the Renewer of the world, who renews His Church continually by His love, and perfects her in beauty by His holy gifts, and summons to her the peoples who are far off. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening and at all times and seasons and hours and moments of the days of our life for ever. Amen.

Praise to You and thanksgiving to You, Jesus Christ , unshakable rock of truth on which the Holy Church is established, rock of Moses which gave forth twelve streams to quench the thirst of Israel....It is from this Church that, in due season, streams of spiritual water flow, her true doctrine to give to drink in joy to all peoples. It is of her that David sang when he said that the daughter of the king is adorned with all spiritual beauty within, not like the tabernacle of the Law which Moses raised as a shadow of that which was to come, but with the glorious royal robe of faith and with the holy mystery of baptism and the radiance of the Holy Spirit, with the spiritual and heavenly table of the blood of the Lamb without stain or blemish, and with the Sun of Righteousness, Christ her Bridegroom, and with the brightness of the doctors inspired by the Holy Spirit. It was the Church that Solomon saw, in a vision, in the house which he built for the Most High. It was of her that Isaiah prophesied when he said: Stand and be enlightened because your light has come and the glory of the Lord is rising upon you. David sang of her when he said: Leave your people and your father's house for the King of kings has desired your beauty. Of her all wondrous things are spoken: her countenance is bright, her eyes are shining, her garments are resplendent. The Lord of the worlds is her Bridegroom. John is the Bridegroom's friend, the apostles and martyrs the wedding-guests.

Therefore the peoples sing to her and with them we cry and say: Remember, Lord, Your Holy Church. Fulfil in her Your promise. Extend her borders to all parts and seal her children by Your saving Cross.

Prepare us and our departed that on the last day, at Your second coming, we may offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn [3]

Remember Your Church which You acquired from ancient times.

Rise and be clothed with light, O Church of true believers,
Your light is come, the Lord exalted and terrible
comes to dwell in you.
All peoples and nations
from one end of the world to the other
are gathered in you to hear the Good News
and to know that He is King for ever.
Praise unceasingly Him who has chosen you from the beginning
and has established His sacred altar within you
and has placed in you His body and His blood of life for pardon.

In Olden days

Solomon built a great temple for Your Divinity to dwell in.
Twice You descended in it, Most High,
and from the throne of the Winged Creatures Your voice was heard.
But on this holy altar we venerate the body of Your Only Son.
And with supplication we ask You to send Your Holy Spirit
that He may sanctify it and purify it,
that it may be the dwelling place of Your Majesty
that those who confess the Trinity may receive Him from it.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Rejoice, thrill with joy, Church of true believers.
Raise your voice in song and chant the praise of the Beloved[4] Son
who suffered for you and delivered your children from death,
and translated them into the dwellings of life.
He has placed in you His body and His blood
that you may be purified from your sins,
that you may enter the bridal chamber,
that you may take your pleasure with Him in the heavens
and inherit eternal life
in the mysterious dwelling place where death has no power.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

O Church, stand on the high mountains.
Sing praise to your Bridegroom who has taken away from you
the evil of the darkness of error,
and made the true light to shine upon your face,
that it may spread on earth and dissipate the darkness.
Say to the nations: I stand and will not be shaken.
Confess without ceasing how great is the fruit within you;
He who is sacrificed by you for the remission of sins
instead of lambs and other victims.

To our fathers and brothers who rest now
and are quit of this life of time,
until the day of the resurrection of the dead
grant repose, Lord, to their souls in the abode of light.
May their bones in the tomb feel that memory is made of them.
And when at Your command the children of the earthly Adam
rise and are clothed in glory and honour,
may they enter with You into Paradise
and offer praise to You who are their resurrection.

Prayer of Incense

Accept, Lord, this fragrant incense
which we offer in our weakness to Your Majesty,
that You may give joy to the children of Your Holy Church,
the joy of Your salvation.

Gladden sinners by Your forgiveness
and remove from her all conflicts and rivalries,
that we may offer pure praise and true thanksgiving,
to You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.
O Church, give thanks to the Son with beautiful songs,
and make offerings of praise on the day of Your Dedication.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

Holy Church, rejoice and exult on the day of your Dedication.
Chant and sing a new praise with all solemnity.

And give thanks to the Bridegroom
who has espoused you on the Cross.
By the feast which He has prepared for you
He gives joy to the earth and the heavens.

Blessed are you, O Church,
the body of the Son makes your assemblies delightful,
like a fire of choice incense which gives forth its fragrance.
Blessed are you, for no fragrance is equal
to that of the medicinal herb which He gives you,
the breath of life that is from heaven.

Today the choice altar is set up in your midst
and on it is placed in a holy manner His body and His blood.
Call your children. Eat and drink and take your pleasure,
and give glory to the Father who has made you the bride of His Son.

Glory to the Father who built the Church on prophecy.
Adoration to the Son who completed it with the apostles.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who adorns her with mystic gifts.
One essence in three. To Him be praise.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations[5]

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
He has built His sanctuary on a high place,
and has established it on earth for ever.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
In the past God spoke through the prophets and sages.
But in this age He spoke through His Only Son.
Speak to us, Lord, as You spoke to Your disciples.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Mathew 16:13-19 On this rock I will build My Church.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer all together with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who came to this world to make all things new, remove from Your Churches the old leaven that has increased along the centuries. Restore in them the poverty of Your Incarnation and make them shine with the truth and simplicity of Your Gospel, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who called Your Church through the prophets, and through the apostles made her reach out to the ends of the earth, and through Your Holy Spirit made her radiant with the love of Your saints, strengthen us for the spiritual service which the world expects from us, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all peoples, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

On this day of the feast of Your Church, O Lord, make us cast off the old garment which is spoilt by the passions of the lower nature. Grant us to be resplendent like You in the garment of light given us by water and the Spirit, that we may rejoice and delight in the Holy Church and praise You, Christ our God, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P...6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.....P...1.

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord.... P.1.

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.... P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.... P.7

Response

With those from on high,
the heads of the angelic powers,
we give thanks to You and we praise You, as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures!

With the Winged Creatures we bless You.
With the Fiery Ones we hallow Your name, O Lover of Humankind.
With the angels we bow to You in adoration.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures!

On the Sunday of the Dedication of the Church,
heaven and earth rejoice and sing praise to the Father
who sent His Son to save us.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures!

Heavenly Bridegroom, You betrothed the Holy Church.
You saved her by Your blood,
and You give her life and the Kingdom.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures!

It is good to offer praise,
glory and adoration and the greatest honour,
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
One true God, to Him all praise.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 46 (45) God is for us a refuge and strength....

Response

The Lord of all cosmic forces is with us.
He is our shelter and our strength.

Even though the earth should rock we shall not fear.
The waters of a river give joy to the city of God,
God is within, it cannot be destroyed.

Glorious and Holy Bridegroom
who exalted Your Church in the creation,
hallow us by Your Holy Spirit,
that we may sing praise to Your Lordship
and offer worship in spirit and in truth.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.....to the one true God, Trinity of persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, whose glory and might the heavens declare, while the sea and the land and all that is in them proclaim His power and wisdom. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Christ our God, You are extolled by the orders of fire and spirit gloriously. To You ministers without flesh offer their threefold cry of " holy " in the Church of the Firstborn in heaven. Yet You are pleased to be blessed and praised by the children of earth in the tabernacle of Your Holy Church. She is adorned by You, her true Bridegroom. She is built upon the bones of Your friends, and established on the truth of Your loved ones. This Holy Church, Your prophets and seers signified beforehand in their parables and allegories and actions, and You who fashioned her by this, showed their dark sayings to be true.

Therefore we beseech You, Christ our God, visit Your Holy Church and fulfil in her Your sure promise: Behold, I am with you even to the end of the world. Save her at the hour of trial. Deliver her from all afflictions. Lengthen her cords. Make firm her tent pegs in true faith. Draw up her ranks in praise, and order her assemblies in songs of the Holy Spirit. Enlarge her borders. Set up in her true pastors and teachers and priests and deacons who may spread the knowledge of Your Gospel of truth. Establish in her rulers and leaders who obey and follow Your commands while serving Your people. And we will offer praise to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn *Be blessed and happy*

Blessed are you, Church of true believers,
spouse of the Heavenly Bridegroom.
Moses on Sinai had a vision of You, poor one, made to reign,

all adorned and resplendent with gold
and arrayed in a robe as bright as fire.
When he saw Your beauty he was moved
and filled with wonder at Your loveliness.
He descended and made the tabernacle like You,
the passing tabernacle which came to an end.
And You the Church became renowned all over the world.

Listen to this, all you nations.

The Bridegroom has prepared a wedding feast
and slayed the fatted calf
and called the guests, His people, to make merry with Him.
The Heavenly Bridegroom has made a feast for His guests
to rejoice in watching and fasting and prayer.
He has broken His body and made Himself food.
He has mixed His blood and made Himself drink.
Behold, the nations are saved by His blood.
The Church His bride takes her delight in it,
and His Mother who brought Him forth sings praise to Him.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to the Son of God who espoused the Holy Church.
He Himself gave her His innocent blood as dowry
and set up in her, baptism, a holy womb.
He built in her the altar for the pardon of the world.
He placed in her prophets and apostles
and with them good martyrs.
He gave her teachers of the true faith.
Blessed is He who built the Church
and adorned her with all beauty.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

On Sinai Moses saw the Holy Church like a building
all adorned, standing high, an image of all the nations.
And when he descended and as he was commanded,
he made a temporary tabernacle in its likeness
for the priests, the children of Aaron.
The tabernacle came to an end, but the Church sings praise.
Her people in her cry out: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, Son,
who betrothed the Church and adorned her with all beauty.

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8.

Psalm 81 (80) Ring out your joy to God....

Response
Sing joyfully to God, our strength;
to the Lord who brought us from the land of bondage,
to feed us with finest wheat
and fill us with honey from the rock.

Holy Church of true believers,
bride of the Heavenly Bridegroom,
sing praise to Him and offer thanksgiving
to Christ who gave you power over all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.. to the Wise Architect who built His great Church and established her as the sacrament of salvation for all humankind; to the Good Shepherd who went after the sheep that had strayed and gathered them into His fold of refuge. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Praise to You, and thanksgiving to You, Beloved Son of the Father beyond all speech, Eternal Being beyond comprehension. We offer thanks to You, O Lord, and we beseech You that You will visit Your Church, one, holy, catholic, and deliver her from everything which might cause offence and stumbling to Your faithful people. Grant her peace and rest and tranquillity from the waves and storms of revolutions which cause her to be shaken in secret or openly. She was signified by the fathers and the patriarchs from generations in many and various ways: Noah by the ark, Abraham by the altar which he made on the top of the mountain, Jacob by the stone which he anointed, Moses by the earthly tabernacle and Solomon by the house which he built for God. She was bought by Your life-giving blood and cleansed by Your propitiatory baptism, and redeemed by Your Cross.

Therefore rejoice, O bride of the Heavenly King. This is the festival

of the Bridegroom. This is the feast of His praise. This is the marriage-supper of the bride, and these are her songs of delight. Let us also rejoice and be glad without ceasing on this festival. With the heavenly companies let us sing praise to Him who in His love descended for the salvation of our race and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The lovers of His Name will be set free by Him.

Christ the Heavenly Bridegroom
makes a magnificent banquet for the Church
and introduces His bride into the feast on high.
He invites all nations to the marriage feast.
He makes to sit there the twelve teachers and the seventy
who proclaimed the Good News of the Kingdom.
David the son of Jesse, carries his harp and sings praise to her.

He will speak in parables from of old

Isaiah, the glorious prophet, says to the Church:
Open wide your doors, enlarge your dwelling,
for, behold, your Lord and Spouse is coming
to become sacrifice on the altar.
He raises from your midst rulers
and the glorious order of the priesthood.
When they pray on earth their will is done in heaven.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Church and her people give thanks to Christ
the Son who came and espoused her
and laid down His life of His own will
at the hands of the wicked who crucified Him on the wood.
He gives His holy body and His propitiatory blood
to the blessed nations who believe in Him.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Ascend the high mountain, O Holy Church, and sing praise.
See, the power which your Lord gives you
extends to the heights and the depths.
Kings and all judges fall at your feet
for they know that the King who crowns them dwells in you.

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord....P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia.....P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.....P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us!

Our Lord, be gracious to us on this holy feast.

And on that feast which shall not pass away,
give us a place at Your right hand.

Rise, O Church, and assemble all your people
to repay with songs of praise
the Lord who in His love chose you and betrothed you
and made you His glorious bride.

On this day, behold, the Holy and Glorious Church
offers her adorations and praises
and she sings on all tunes:
Glory to the Son by whose blood I receive life.

Have compassion on Your Church, O our Saviour.
Make concord to reign among her priests,
that they may teach the true faith in like manner.

We adore the Father and the Son.
We give thanks to the Holy Spirit
who protects the Church of true believers
and who will save her people by His grace.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels....P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ.. .. P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.....P.6

MEDITATION

Sunday
of the Renovation of the Church
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father.....P.1

Opening Prayer

Renew, Lord, Your Holy Church and make to grow all the believers with a good growth, well pleasing to You. Endow them with a discerning mind that they may be at peace with all; and make them attain that full stature which is becoming to You, and they will praise You joyfully with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 48(47) The Lord is great and worthy...

Response

The Lord is great and worthy of our praise,
in His holy city, upon His sacred mountain.
O God, we ponder Your love at this evening hour,
Your praise is like Your Name,
it reaches from one end of the earth to the other.
Such is our God. It is He who leads us.

Blessed are You, who by Your Cross broke down the enmity
that stood like a dividing wall between You and Your people,
and with Your own body create a new humanity.
Blessed are You, who built Your Holy Church on rock
and adorned her with all spiritual beauty,
and on the day of her Renovation rejoice heaven and earth.

O Holy Church, array yourself and be clothed in praise and glory.
Let your doors, high and strong, be opened today and not closed.
Your Renovation is celebrated in the four quarters of the earth,

and on account of this a new song is sung
by the mouth of your children: You are blessed, Lord, the Strong,
God of our fathers, Lord of the whole creation.

Let us celebrate with a new song Christ our King
who adorns and glorifies and exalts His Holy Church,
and raises her to the heights, to His throne,
and makes her sit at the right hand of Him who sent Him.
We praise Him: You are blessed, Lord, the Strong,
God of our fathers, Lord of the whole creation.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us..P.3

Response

O Church, chant the glory of the Bridegroom King,
who has chosen you for His bride,
and who wrote the deed of your dowry with His blood.
Praise and give thanks and worship Him with your children.
He is your Lord, He who guards you by His Cross.

O Church of believers, on the feast of your Renovation,
those in the heights rejoice and on earth people exult.
They sing praise to Christ who has espoused you
and has made you His dwelling place,
a house built on rock for those who believe in Him.

Christ humbled Himself out of goodness
and took the Church for His bride,
who now sings praise to Him.
He breaks and shares His holy body with her people.
They eat and say: Come let us bow down in adoration to Him.

Christ who humbled Yourself for our salvation and took the Church
for Your bride, and by Your blood saved her from deceit and untruth,
in Your goodness, strengthen our bodies and our souls,
that we may cry out in thanksgiving:
Glory to You and to Him who sent You.

Let us give glory to the Eternal Father.
Let us adore the Son who has assembled the Church on earth.
Let us give thanks to the Holy Spirit, who sanctified her and adorned her and made her the bride. Behold, in her His name is praised.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Heavenly Bridegroom who betrothed a Church of people stained with sin and purified her and made her His Holy Bride and summoned the prophets and apostles and called them to His marriage feast and made for her a glorious banquet. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening.....

Christ, Creator and Fashioner of the boundaries of the world, whose glory the heaven of heavens proclaims and the vault of heaven, set with stars, shows forth the work of its Creator, You made immaterial spirits to sing Your praises in the Church of heaven, and on earth You were pleased to be ministered to by hands of flesh in the servant Church, and You made her a temple and an abode, Your resting place, and You were desirous of her beauty. Moses, the head of the prophets, revealed her mystery in the Tent of the Presence. David signified her in his psalms. Isaiah spoke of her in his parables, Ezekiel, son of Buzi, in his visions and Zechariah, son of Addo, in his glorious deeds. She was built up by the slaughter of her Bridegroom. She was crowned with His crown of thorns and was redeemed by His wounds. She is the decorated house, the comely ship, the well planned town, the strong city, the mighty tower, the holy mountain, the bride who left her father and the women's apartments and went after Him of whom the young maidens went in search, the virgin souls who do His will.

Therefore we beseech You, Gracious Lord, on this festal and holy day of her Renovation, look upon her with love, protect her from all harm and evil, seal her children with Your Cross and Your blood; and while she celebrates the festivals of Your Economy with joy permeated with love, make her children guests of Your Kingdom. And may she renounce all worldly power and glory, that she may fulfil the mission she inherited from You to be the servant of God and people. Prompt her to set free and to deliver all those who are enslaved: the poor by the fetters of misery and disability, the rich by their pride and greed. Make her the sacrament

of unity in the diversity of nations and cultures of humankind, to bring all people into communion with each other in the fellowship of the Spirit. And on account of all Your favours to her she will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

God shall possess her for ever.

Church of true believers, the Word, the Beloved Son of God,
has marked you on the palm of His hands.
Your walls are indestructible.
Bride of the Most High,
rejoice and thrill with gladness on your feast.
On the day of your Renovation raise your head with joy.
Your shepherd is glad to meet you,
He rejoices and sanctifies you.
Priests stand gloriously to receive the Holy Spirit,
who descends to hallow the place of your celebrations.

He lowered the heavens and descended.

In the darkness of a thick cloud God descended on Sinai.
The mountain carried the Mighty One who carries all things.
Legions of angels, companies of creatures of fire and spirit
and innumerable powers descend blowing their horns,
and the trumpets also make a joyful noise
before the Heavenly Bridegroom, who comes down
to espouse the Holy Church. Blessed is He,
who built the Church and set up an altar in her.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The glorious prophet Isaiah announced to the Church of believers:
Behold, people from every country come and gather in you.
Your sons and daughters come to do away with deceit and untruth,
and the name of the Lord your God reigns in heaven and on earth.
The Spirit, the Comforter, comes to purify you from your stains
and dwells with you, in your holy temple,
in which the Glorious Trinity is worshipped.

From age to age and for ever. Amen

Praise to You, God, one and three, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one true God, not begotten and begotten,
truly Origin and Source of all good things,
Glorious Trinity, eternal and self-subsistent,
Lord adored by all, strengthen Your servants,
who keep festival with faith and love
on the Day of the Renovation of Your Well-beloved, the Holy Church.

To our fathers and brothers who have fallen asleep
and left the life in time, until the day of the resurrection comes,
grant, Lord, rest to their souls in Your dwellings of light.
May their bones in the grave feel that memory is made of them.
And when at Your command the children of the earthly Adam shall rise,
may they be clothed in honour and glory, and with You
enter Paradise to offer praise to You, who are their resurrection.

Prayer of Incense

On the Feast of the Renovation of Your Holy Church,
Lord God, receive this fragrant incense
offered to Your Sovereignty by our poor selves.
Rejoice her children with Your salvation,
and gladden sinners by the pardon of their faults.

Remove from her all dissensions and disunity
and grant forgiveness to all those
who have departed from her with a living faith.
And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You
and to Your Father and to the Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.
O Church, on the Day of your Renovation, give thanks
with beautiful songs and offer gifts of praise to the Son.

Peace, who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their children by the Cross of Light.

Light of the Day, on your feast, rejoice with your children.
Behold, gifts come to you from all sides, receive them

as marriage gifts offered to the blessed bride,
that on the day of your feast we may place them on your table.

Rejoice, Church of the Spirit, for He dwells in you who says,
I will wipe away all tears and put an end to suffering.
I am the beginning and the end and also the middle.
And you must attain the fulness of being, the fulness of God Himself.

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the All Glorious Father
give you the spiritual powers of wisdom and vision,
by which come the knowledge of Him, the Head of the Church,
His body and the fulness of Him who fills the universe.

Glory to the Father, who built the Church with the prophets.
Adoration to the Son, who established her with the apostles.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit, who adorns her with mystic gifts.
To Him, who is one essence and three, all glory.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Remember Your Church which You acquired in ancient times,
when You delivered the people of Your inheritance.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Repair her breaches, turn her wilderness into a garden.
Make her put on the new nature,
constantly renewed in Your image and likeness.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 9:18-26 Peter's confession of faith.

Intercessions

Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer all together with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who likened Your Kingdom to the yeast hidden in three measures of flour, and thus taught that a little good yeast is enough to leaven all the dough, make us to get rid of all the old leaven, that the Church and the world may be made into a completely new batch of bread for the renewal of humanity, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who came to us not to be ministered unto but to give Your life as a redemption for the world, make Your Church use her power and authority in the service of humankind, the service of the poor and the downtrodden, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N.. Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N.. our Metropolitan Archbishop, N.. our Bishop, N..our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and for their services to the people, for the fostering of universal brotherhood among all human beings, beyond distinctions of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world, and harmony be restored among all nations, and strengthened in this our country of India, and in the whole Creation, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

On this day of the feast of Your Church, O Lord, make us cast off the old garment which is spoilt by the passions of the lower nature. Grant us to be resplendent like You in the garment of light given us by water and the Spirit, that we may rejoice and delight in the Holy Church and praise You, Christ our God, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy!Lord,..... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.....P.7

Response

Why do you love sleep more than praise, my soul?
How long will you be engrossed
in pleasures that do not profit?
Awake now and rise and sing praise.
Lord of all, to You be praise.

On the day of your Renovation, O Church,
praise the Son of God who lowered Himself for your sake
and made you His Glorious Bride.
Raise your voice with joy.
Lord of all, to You be praise.

Blessed are you, Church of believers,
the Bridegroom who espoused you dies not.
He is with you until the end of the world, as He promised,
and no storm can prevail against you.
Lord of all, to You be praise.

Blessed is He who lowered Himself to us
and took the flesh of our nature as His garment
and betrothed her, a fair bride,
whom He adorned with all spiritual beauty to be like Him,
and gave her authority over the whole creation.
Lord of all, to You be praise.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
One true God, to Him be praise.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 65(64) To You our praise is due, O God...

Response

O God, You crown the year with good gifts.
Wherever You go there is plenty.
The meadows are filled with flocks,
the pastures provide food for the cattle.
The hills are girded with joy.
The terraces are decked with corn.
The lowlands grow high grasses.
Everything shouts and sings for joy.

The Son of the King saw the Church going astray.
Captivated by His love for her He willed to sanctify her,
that she might be worthy to become His bride.
He came from His height and tested her love
and united her to Himself and became one with her.
He suffered for her and by His suffering washed and purified her.
He drew her to Himself and made her the mother of all nations.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.. to the Bridegroom from on high, who betrothed the Church of believers below by His holy passion and placed in her the life-giving Cross for the salvation of the people. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ our God, who built up Your Holy Church in Jerusalem and gathered into her... the peoples who have confessed Your redeeming Cross, You promised to her that the powers of death shall not prevail against her, because You are with her and she shall not be moved. And You established her for ever according to Your sure promise when You said: Behold, I am with You even to the end of the world. The holy prophets prophesied concerning her renewal, and the divine apostles made proclamation concerning her salvation, and the noble martyrs were crowned in witness to the truth of her faith. While we celebrate the

festival of her Renovation today we rejoice and say: Stand and be enlightened, because the Wise Builder who laid your foundation has strengthened the bars of your doors. Stand and be enlightened because the Saviour of all creation has blessed your people within you. Stand and be enlightened because God mighty for evermore has chosen you to be His habitation. Stand and be enlightened because the divine David called you the elect of God. Stand and be enlightened, because the prophet Zechariah called you the lamp stand of the holy place and Ezekiel saw your figure in the throne of crystal. Stand and be enlightened, because you are named the mountain which God chose that He might rest upon it. And many other wonderful things are spoken of you, the chosen of God. Stand and be enlightened, because you are the temple in which the Lord is pleased to dwell, and the Holy One of holy ones makes you holy by His Spirit. Stand and be enlightened, because the glory of the Father has made you a bridal chamber on high and a throne below.

Therefore, Lord, we beseech You that You will remember Your Holy Church which You acquired of old by Your own blood. Make us to grow with her into a spiritual dwelling for humankind. Strengthen her to oppose all injustice and exploitation of the downtrodden. Prompt her to be servant and poor, that she may bring all people into communion with one another as well as with You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

I exult and sing and offer praise.

Leap for joy and exult, on the feast of your Renovation, O Church.
Sing praise to Him who rules over the kings.
He betrothed you from the waters and set up within you
a holy altar in atonement for the sins of all your people.
Halleluia, sing to Him in praise and thanksgiving,
to Him who dwells in you upon the altar.

He showed His ways to Moses

On the summit of Sinai Moses saw the Church as a blazing fire.
He descended and made the tent of meeting in its likeness,
that the children of Aaron might officiate in it.
Halleluia, blessed is He who built His Church on earth.
Every day she sings praise to Him.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah the prophet saw the Lord of all in the temple
seated on a throne of fire, and the Fiery Ones cried out:
Holy! Holy! blessed be the honour of the Most High.
Halleluia, glory to the Son of God
who betrothed the Church who adores Him.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Receive our petitions, O Lord,
with the fragrant incense offered to Your Godhead.
Forgive our offences and faults, and pardon us all follies,
halleluia, that we may offer praise and thanksgiving,
to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....P.8

Psalm 84 (83) How lovely is Your dwelling place, Lord...

Response

How lovely is Your dwelling place, our Lord,
how dear is Your Holy Church.
One day within her courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.
Our hearts are longing and yearning for You.
Our whole being cries out with joy to the Living God.

O Daughter of the Nations, rejoice and exult in your Spouse,
who in His loving kindness has magnified you.
He has given you His body to provide food for you,
after sanctifying you by water and the Spirit,
and consecrating you with the other Mysteries.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise..

Praise... to the Wise Architect who built His priestly city and surrounded it with a wall of protection and established a people as a tower of redemption, the Good Shepherd, who gathered into the fold of salvation His sheep which were scattered. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration at this time of the Night Vigil...

Praise to You and thanksgiving to You, Beloved Son of the Father beyond telling, Eternal Being beyond comprehension. We offer thanksgiving to You, O Lord, and beseech You that You will visit Your Holy Church, one and catholic, which, by Your precious Cross, You deliver from evil.. Grant her peace and rest and calm from the troubled waves and storms raised by her enemies, both hidden and in the open. She it is whom the fathers and patriarchs signified from generation to generation, and represented in different ways: Noah by the ark, Abraham by the altar which he built on the top of the mountain, Jacob by the stone which he anointed, Moses by the tent of meeting. She it was whom You bought by Your life-giving blood, and cleansed by Your atoning baptism and redeemed by Your Cross. With all these things the Holy Church is adorned. And as she stands at the right hand side of the Bridegroom, her Lord, who is there who will not desire her beauty?

Therefore, rejoice, O Bride of the Heavenly King.... This is the festival of the Bridegroom, this is the banquet of His praises, this is the marriage feast of the bride and these are her songs of delight. Let us also rejoice without ceasing on this festival and with the heavenly companies let us praise Him who in His love descended for the salvation of our race, that all humankind might find its way to Him, who is the way, the truth and the life, and to His Father and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

You exalted me on the rock and You comforted me.

Our Lord built His Church on Simon the rock.
He made her His own dwelling place, high and sublime,
on seventy pillars from pure granite from the mountains,
He the architect who built the highest heaven, halleluia.
You who uphold Your Church,
be gracious and compassionate to all.

Come, listen and declare to them.

Beloved, do you not see how the bride is tossed
on the surging waves of the sea?
Yet her treasures are not lost and she does not sink.
Moses goes before her and Aaron behind.
Myriam and her companions play the timbrel in the centre,
halleluia, halleluia, and sing praise to God mighty for evermore.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Church of believers is a paradise full of good things,
the Bride of the Most High. In her are the baptism for the new life,
the holy altar and the bones of the martyrs.
In her are the priests, who consecrate
and offer the Eucharist and distribute it,
halleluia, halleluia, the medicine of life.

From age to age and for ever. Amen

Glory to Christ, who built the Holy Church
on the palm of His hand and set up an altar in her,
and gave her as foundation the prophets and the apostles
and the holy martyrs who died for His love.
Halleluia, halleluia, and they take their delight with Him
at the feast of gladness.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord.....P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.
Our Lord, be gracious to us on this holy feast.

And on that feast which shall not pass away
give us a place at Your right hand.

The Church is like a gathering of chirping birds.
With the mouth they sing praise
and with the tongue they offer thanksgiving.

I went round the streets of the city seeking Him,
my Beloved, for whom my heart is longing.
The guards met me and beat me,
but He came to me and put them to flight.

Jesus is mine and I am His.
His delight is in me. He spreads His garment over me.
He kisses me with the kisses of His mouth
and takes me to the bridal chamber on high.

Glory to the Father who chose you.
Adoration to the Son who betrothed you and to the Holy Spirit
by whom, every day, your children are sanctified.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels...P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ.. P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God P.6

MEDITATION

Sunday
of the Annunciation to Zechariah
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God, to celebrate this holy festival of the announcement of the conception of Your lofty preacher in purity and holiness, with sweet-sounding spiritual harps and clear voices. Like him may we be blessed with the blessing of the joy which does not pass away, and we will offer fruits of thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 89(88): 1-22 I will sing for ever of Your love...

Response

We will sing for ever the story of Your love, O Lord.
We will proclaim Your faithfulness to all generations.
We recall how You spoke to the prophets Your friends and declared:
I have found My servant and I will anoint him.
My hand shall be with him and My arm shall make him strong.

The Wakeful One descended from the highest heaven
and announced to Zechariah in the holy temple:
A son will be born to you and you shall name him John.
He will go before his Lord as forerunner
and preach salvation for the whole world.

At the evening hour and offering of incense in the sanctuary,
Zechariah the priest contemplated a fearful vision.
An angel wrapped in fire announced to him and said:
Do not doubt, Zechariah, but proclaim with joy:
You are blessed and praised, O God of our fathers.

Your prayer has gone up to God, He has answered it now.
Elizabeth your wife shall bear a son whom you shall call John.
He shall clear a straight path for the Lord.
Cry and proclaim in the sanctuary:
You are blessed and praised, O God of our fathers.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us.....P.3

Response

The angel Gabriel announced to Zechariah:
You shall have a son and you shall name him John.
Your heart will thrill with joy and many will be glad,
for he shall make straight the way before the King
who comes to save Adam from his enslavement to sin.

When Zechariah was offering incense before the Lord
he saw something strange and wonderful.
An angel announced to him and said: You will have a son.
But because he did not believe,
his tongue was tied and he remained dumb.

Lord our God, we call upon You passionately.
In Your love hear us and in Your mercy pardon our sins.
Make us worthy of Your Kingdom on the day of Your coming,
by the prayer of Your Mother
and of all the saints who have loved You.

Lord, open our minds and enlighten us
through Your Holy Spirit, and raise our thoughts
to Your Mysteries, that we may be worthy
to celebrate the feasts of Your Dispensation
with pure and joyful hearts.

Glory, thanksgiving, honour and adoration to the Son of God
who was manifested to us from a daughter of David
and who, before He appeared, sent His forerunner,
of whom today the head of the angel announces the conception.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise....to the Adorable and Hidden Word who became flesh for the salvation of the children of Adam and brought renewal to those who had grown old, fertility and joy to the barren, consolation to the sorrowful and gladness to those in gloom. He raised those who had fallen and those who were bent He made to stand upright. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening.....

We adore and praise You, O Word of the Hidden Father, Jesus Christ, cause of all good and source of all joy. For when we were sick You yearned for our salvation. Your love constrained You and You were pleased to become flesh and were united with our nature conforming Yourself to our likeness that we might see and recognise the light in You, the Sun of Righteousness, and be spiritually enlightened by You. First then You sent before You Gabriel, the messenger of joy, to announce to the venerable old man and priest Zechariah the fruit beyond expectation... Behold, a great wonder and marvel was seen that to them who were without hope and without consolation, consolation came and a son was born, the Voice which was to proclaim the inexpressible Word. The star was seen before the Sun, the lamp before the Light, the friend of the Bridegroom before the Bridegroom, he who was great among those born of women before him who was before all in his pre-eminence, the firstborn of a prophetess before the Firstborn of all creation.

Therefore we beseech You, Lord, our Lord, on this day of the announcement to the barren, make our souls which are barren of the fruitfulness of good deeds, to bring forth to You, in place of children, fruits of purity and holiness and with them glory and honour. Fill us with the breath of Your Holy Spirit like John, that like him Your Churches may denounce and resist all injustice and oppression and thus witness to Your Kingdom. And we will praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

His strength is from heaven.

Gabriel received the command
and straightway flew and descended.
He entered into the sanctuary and stood before Zechariah

and announced to him that he would have a son.
He who did not believe the secret mysteries revealed to him
was taught by the dumbness that fell upon him
that all that had been said by the angel was true.

His tongue declares justice

In the temple Zechariah saw the angel.
The spirit spoke to him,
his mouth full of the joyous message:
Your wife shall bring forth a son
and you shall name him John.
Blessed are You, Offspring of the Father,
who give an offspring to the barren and send him before You
to prepare the way of life for the creation.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Gabriel descends to announce to Zechariah
the birth of John, the son of barrenness.
And as he does not believe, he becomes dumb and cannot speak.
Blessed are You, Jesus, Child of miracle,
who give fruit to the barren womb
and from the womb of a virgin
You came forth to give life to our humanity.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed is the Christ who came at the end of time
and accomplished the mysteries of the prophets
who had announced His manifestation.
He dwelt in the womb of a daughter of David,
the Virgin full of grace, and sent before Him John, His messenger,
son of the barren woman, to proclaim and make known His manifestation
and to make plain the way before Him.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Heavenly High Priest , by an Angel of Fire
standing on the right of the altar where incense was burning,
You announced to Zechariah in his priestly office
concerning the birth of the preacher of righteousness.

May the fragrance of our incense
also be pleasing to You and our prayer be heard,
and all requests profitable to believers be granted,
for You are in truth the High Priest of our confession.
We offer praise to You and to Your Father
and to Your Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O priest Zechariah,
may your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayers and pardon us.

Lord, by the prayers of Zechariah Your priest,
give times of spiritual strength
to all who celebrate his memory with faith.

The Word of the Father having decided to come into the world
judged it good to send before Him a voice to prepare His way.
Venerable woman whose time is passed, old as you are,
you shall bring forth the Voice of the Word who comes.

While the holy priest, Zechariah the Just,
is standing in the Holy of holies to officiate before God,
Gabriel the archangel, the chief of the powers,
comes to bring the good news which fills him with awe.

The angel of fire announces to the priest in the sanctuary
concerning John and says: God has heard your prayer.
Your wife Elizabeth in her old age shall bear a child
who shall be the voice of the Word.
Her womb is barren, but she shall have a marvellous offspring,
the preacher of truth, the mighty thunder of the Gospel.

Glory to the Father who gave fruit to the barren womb.
Adoration to the Son who chose John from his mother's womb.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit, the fulfiller of all perfection,
the life of all beings and the source of all our joys.
To Him be praise.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Lord speaks in visions to the holy ones
to announce His salvation and bring the good news to the poor.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
In former times He spoke through the prophets,
today He announces the coming of His forerunner
to prepare His people to listen to Him.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 1:5 -17 Annunciation of the conception of John.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer all together with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who when You were about to take flesh from the Virgin at Nazareth to save the human race, made the barren beyond hope to bear fruit, quicken in our barren souls that faith in You which obtains life eternal, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who opened the barren womb for the conception of the preacher of truth and justice, make Your Churches always stand for that justice which liberates people to be their true selves, in freedom with dignity, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who marked the beginning of our salvation with wonders, endow us, Your followers, with a deep spiritual insight to recognise Your presence in our brothers and sisters as well as in the events of our daily life, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N..our Metropolitan Archbishop, N..our Bishop, N..our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all people, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant, Lord, that we may always receive Your Word with a faith free from all doubt. And while we celebrate with joy the festivals of Your Economy, make us worthy to be called at Your right hand at Your second coming, Christ, Firstborn of the creation, of the living and of the dead, we beseech You and we will cry out:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy!Lord,..... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.....P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and people on earth cry out: Holy! Holy! to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

When Gabriel received the secret sign from the Most-High,
he flew and descended to bring the good news to Zechariah.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed be the Son of God who when He wanted to visit us
to save the creation sent a voice to prepare His coming.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 1 Happy indeed is the man...

Response

Happy indeed is the man
who follows not the counsel of the wicked;
nor lingers in the way of sinners
nor sits in the company of scorners,
but whose delight is the law of the Lord
and who ponders His Law day and night.

Glorious is Your Incarnation,
O Word of the Father and Effulgence of His Being,
who appeared from Him before the worlds.
You who are from everlasting dwelt in the womb,
as You willed to make us Your children,
our Lord who became flesh and dwelt among us.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.....to the Hidden One, the Living Being and Giver of all life, three worshipful and holy persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one true God. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil.....

Glory to You, High God, to whom all things are possible , Gentle One who give hope to those who are without hope, Doer of wonders and of great things, Bestower of abundant gifts, Redeemer whose conception and birth were predicted and honoured from the beginning by conceptions beyond wont and births beyond nature: as of Adam from the virgin earth and Eve from the side of man, of beauteous birds from the waters, the race of man from the ark of wood... fruit from the staff of Aaron, water from the hard rock, old age was renewed by youth, the affliction of barrenness became fruitful. You are He who in Your unspeakable wisdom instructed our humanity beforehand by wondrous signs that we should know that You are able to bring forth from a virgin.

Therefore we beseech You, grant that with spiritual eyes above this world we may contemplate the Mysteries of Your Divine Economy and our hearts may be strengthened in faith and we may offer praise and

thanksgiving with joy, to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

He lowered the heavens and descended.

The archangel Gabriel flew from the heights
and descended in the sanctuary, O great wonder!
He announced to Zechariah: The Preacher will be born to you
who will prepare the way of his Lord, halleluia.
Blessed is the Lord who humbled Himself
and became man of His own will.

Listen to this all you peoples

As Zechariah doubted the words of the Wakeful One,
the Fiery One declared: You will remain dumb.
Your mouth and tongue will be bound
until your offspring will deliver you, halleluia.
Blessed is He who had compassion on the priest
and rejoiced him with the birth of a child much desired.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Wakeful One said to Zechariah the glorious priest:
Your prayer has ascended before the Lord.
Behold, your wife Elizabeth in her old age will bear you a son
and you shall name him John, halleluia.
He will prepare the way of the Lord
who comes to save the whole creation.

From age to age and for ever, Amen.

Zechariah answered to the angel and said:
How can this be, for I am old
and my wife also is well advanced in age?
How could she bear a child?
The angel replied: Halleluia.
Nothing is beyond the power of Him
who can make children for Abraham out of stones.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 3 How many are my foes, O Lord!.....

Response

You, Lord, are a shield to protect us.
You are our glory and You raise our head high.
We cry aloud to the Lord,
and He answers us from His holy mountain...
We wake, for the Lord upholds us.

You were above the heights
near the Father who has no beginning
and You descended on earth,
lowering Yourself like the mortal ones.
Glory to You who humbled Yourself.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Eternal Word who was from the beginning and was manifested in a human body, to Him who gave the fruit of miracle which made known the child who was the Son of the Virgin. To Him we offer praise, glory and exaltation, at this time of the Night Vigil, and at all times.....

Christ our God who were made flesh while in Your Godhead above the flesh You remained God Almighty; Son of the Hidden Father who appeared from the womb of the Virgin, You who were announced by the prophets beforehand and revealed by the seers and made known by various prefigurations... You who for us who were lost descended to the earth which was barren of virtue, in order that You might raise up our weak race and gather us strangers from the wanderings of vanity. You made us to return to the place of life and made us to approach Your Father and You lifted us unto our former dignity...It was for this that You supported our father Abraham in his old age by Isaac and put an end to the sterility of Sarah through her child. For this You removed the reproach of barrenness of Hannah through Samuel and filled all her house with joy. You sent the angel and rejoiced Manoah and his wife

concerning Samson. You sent Gabriel the archangel to Zechariah in the sanctuary and announced the glad news concerning his child who was to be the bearer of Your mysteries and declared: Your prayer is heard and you shall have a son from her who is barren, in her old age.

Therefore, we beseech You and we implore Your graciousness, O Word of the Father, make us worthy to celebrate this day of the announcement of the glorious conception of Your preacher, in purity and holiness, while Your Church rejoices and exults in the assemblies of her children, that we and our dead may offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Then He spoke in visions with the saints

In the Holy of Holies Zechariah had a vision in the Spirit,
a revelation about John, that Elizabeth would conceive
and bear a son who would announce the Virgin's Son.
Blessed is the Good One who spoke through signs and wonders,
and revealed Himself to the creation as the Son of the Virgin.

Blessed is He who sent Gabriel to bring the Good Tidings to Zechariah

Their prayer was heard and Elizabeth conceived.
She kept by herself, pondering over it in her heart.
This is the Lord's doing, she said: To Him all praise.
Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever and ever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Today is the day of good tidings and rejoicing,
at the announcement of the conception of the Preacher of truth.
On this day the Lord Himself comes to His people,
and He brings salvation to the creation.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory to the Infinite Hidden Almighty revealed in allegories:
To Moses He spoke from the middle of the bush that was on fire
and was not burnt up, and by the water flowing from the rock,
He prefigured the joy of a birth from barrennes. Blessed is He
who descended and dwelt in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, Halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Lord be gracious to us
on the day of the announcement of the Preacher of Truth.

Make us experience the forgiveness of our sins,
that with him we may enter into Your Kingdom.

The Wakeful One descended and announced to the priest
concerning the birth of a son, John the Preacher of Truth.
To you will be born in your old age, he said,
the long expected fruit of your desire.

Blessed is He who sent His messenger into the sanctuary,
to announce to the priest the conception of a son.
And when he did not believe, the Word from on high
bound him in silence and he could no more speak.

Blessed is the Firstborn of the Father
who visited us for the renewal of our race.
He sent a voice before His coming
that he might prepare the way before Him.

Praise and thanksgiving to You,
Lord of all, for all Your favours to us,
who manifested Yourself to the just
in all ways and all manners.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels.....P. 15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ....P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P. 6

MEDITATION

Sunday of the Annunciation to the Mother of God

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God, to praise You with the Fiery One who brought the message of Your coming to the Daughter of David, and to marvel greatly at You with Joseph the Just, when he was made to know the mystery of her conception, and to extol You with holy awe, and Your Glorious Father who begot You, and Your Hidden and All-hallowing Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 18 (17) : 1-20 I love You, Lord, my strength....

Response

I love You, Lord, my strength...
My God is the rock where I take refuge...
O Lord, You brought me forth into freedom.
You saved me because You love me.

God loved the world so much
that He gave His Beloved Son
so that everyone who believes in Him
may have eternal life.

By the angel You sent a greeting of peace to the Immaculate.
In Your graciousness You gave release and brought to an end
the sickness inherited from Eve our mother.
O God of our fathers, You are blessed and worthy of praise.

Gabriel the archangel said:
Behold, in your pure womb you shall conceive your Creator,
the God and ruler of all cosmic forces.
O God of our fathers, You are blessed and worthy of praise.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us....P..3

Response

Glory to Christ who was manifested in His graciousness.
He came forth from Mary, the pure and holy Virgin.
And now He magnifies her memory in heaven and on earth.
All you nations, come, bow down to Him, offering your adorations.

The angel Gabriel announced to the Virgin:
You shall have a Son who shall save all nations.
He will be like a child though He is eternal.
All you nations, come, bow down to Him, offering your adorations.

The Virgin replied to the angel and said to him:
How can this be which you announce to me?
He said to her: The Holy Spirit shall come.
The power of the Most High shall descend on you in holiness.

Peace be with you, O Daughter of David,
full of beauty, and of high and immeasurable glory.
You shall remain a virgin and you shall have pure milk.
You shall have a godly child who shall be called Emmanuel.

Glory, thanksgiving, honour and adoration
to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
in memory of the descent of the Word of God
into a womb of flesh for the salvation of the earthly ones.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise..... to the Eternal Word and Only Son of the Father who at the announcement of Gabriel the archangel came to dwell in the Virgin, Daughter of David, and took flesh in her that He might blot out the sins of the race of Adam. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening.....

Praise and thanksgiving to You, Jesus Christ our God, who created humankind in Your image and sealed them with the likeness of Your

majesty. And when on account of the rebellion against Your commandment they were exiled from their former inheritance, their cry entered into Your presence and You mercifully heard their groaning. You willed to save and deliver them. And to raise them up from their fall, You inclined the heavens and descended on earth. While You did not cease to be God and departed not from the high and lofty throne of Your Being, You entered into the womb of the Virgin. You who gave the expectation of a birth to Abraham, Your conception was announced by a Wakeful One. You gladdened the Virgin with the message of peace instead of the sentence of exile pronounced against Eve, our first mother. Gabriel cried out to her and said: Peace be with you, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed among women. And when by his message of peace he made clear that the ancient hedge of enmity which the Adversary had planted was removed, the creation was filled with joy and clothed in endless gladness. We also answer with the sweet sound of the harp. We exult with pleasant voices. We keep festival with firm steps of the dance and with the voice of Gabriel the archangel we say with joy: Peace be with you, full of grace, our Lord is with you, blessed among women. Peace be with you , full of grace, Mother of the Maker of the universe. Peace be with you, Blessed Ship by whose treasure the whole world is enriched, Beauteous Vine, in the wine of whose cluster the whole creation takes its pleasure. On account of this we , poor sinners, stand in awe and wonder and with joy of heart say that the Lord God has revealed His tenderness and redeemed the world.

Therefore, we beseech you that you will intercede for us and pray to God who was born from you, that He will give us seasons of joy and years of blessings, and times of gladness and rejoicing, and perfect us by the bond of love for Him and for one another. May He prepare us for the bridal chamber with those who were clothed with the seal of baptism and have departed from this life, that both here and there we may keep His festival and offer praise and thanksgiving to Him and to His Father and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

He flew on the wings of the wind.

From the heights Gabriel flew on the wings of the wind,
and taking the letter of his Lord he offered greetings to Mary;
he opened it before her and said to her:

The Lord is with you and shall come forth from you.
He has left His seat on high to make His dwelling within you.
Blessed is He on whom the angels attend in heaven and on earth.

They announced His salvation from day to day.

The good news which Gabriel, the archangel brought
sows peace in the creation
and harmony between the heights and the depths.
He announces to the blessed one: The Lord is with you.
He shall come forth from you, the Lord of all creatures,
the Saviour of the children of Adam.
Blessed is He who in His love, humbled Himself
and was conceived for the salvation of the mortal ones.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The angel descends from the ranks of the flaming ones,
to Blessed Mary who was at prayer and he says to her:
Peace be with you, from you shall come forth the Saviour.
How shall this be? replied Mary, for I know not man.
But the angel said to her:
You shall be with child of the Holy Spirit.
He shall rest upon you in holiness.

From age to age and for ever. Amen

The young maiden said to the angel: Yes, my Lord,
I shall be the mother of the Lord, as you have said.
It is well within the power of the Creator
to descend and dwell in His creation.
He who has formed us has thought it fit
in His graciousness to visit the work of His hands.
Glory to Him who in His love for humankind
has willed to descend and to dwell in me
and to make me the Temple of His Majesty.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

O fair lily, pure and of sweet scent,
your fragrance has spread over the world,
and your ravishing beauty
has led captive all generations of believers.

O full of grace,
pray to your Son who came forth from your womb
that He will receive this fragrant incense
which we offer on your festival.
May He wipe away with it all our offences
and give rest to our departed, now and for ever.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.
Father who sent the message of peace to the blessed one,
make Your peace to dwell in the Churches and in the whole world.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity,
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

The angel descended when Mary was at prayer
to give her the greeting of the Most High:
Peace be with you! Blessed are you among women.
The Lord is with you. You are blessed,
and blessed is the fruit of your virginity.

Having heard this Mary began to reflect thoughtfully.
What is the cause of this unusual greeting?
Fear not, O full of Grace, said the angel, the Lord is pleased
that you should be the Mother of His only Son.
You shall be with child in a holy manner
and bring forth the King whose Kingdom shall have no end.

Mary said: How shall this be which you tell me?
You announce a son but I am not acquainted with marriage.

I hear you speak of a child but I have no partner.
The angel said to her: The Holy Spirit shall come to you;
the power of the Most High will overshadow you,
and of it you shall conceive.

Glory to the Father who sent the angel to announce to Mary.
Adoration to the Son who took flesh from her in holiness.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who graciously chose her,
and then overshadowed her.
Blessed is the mystery of the three. Praise to Him.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
He descends like the dew on the fleece,
like drops of rain on the earth.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
As the rain comes down from heaven
and does not return until it has watered the earth,
the word that goes forth from His mouth
does not return without bearing fruit.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 1: 26-38 The Annunciation to Mary

Intercessions: Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer all together with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who today looked on the lowliness of Your servant Mary and took flesh from her when she received Your word, may we also always receive Your word with faith and make it bear fruit in our lives, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who today took flesh from her who offered herself to Your Father as the Lord's servant, while You on earth were known as the servant of God, inspire Your Churches, to be the servants of their people and of the whole world, like you, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, for the fostering of universal brotherhood among all human beings, beyond distinctions of race, cast and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world, and harmony be restored among all nations, and strengthened in this our country of India, and in the whole Creation, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Word of God who sent Gabriel with the power of the Spirit to announce to the Virgin Mary that You would take flesh from her, bring now Your incarnation to fulfilment in the Churches. Prompt all nations and peoples to transcend their differences and like Mary through humility, sincerity and good will, with determination, find peace and unity in You, Saviour of the world, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy!Lord,..... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.....P.7

Response

With those from on high,
the heads of the angelic powers,
we offer thanksgiving to You and we praise You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures!

With the Winged Creatures we bless You.
With the Fiery Ones we hallow Your name, O Lover of Humankind.
With the angels we bow to You, offering our adorations.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

The angel descended from the ranks of the Fiery Ones
and gave the greeting of peace
to the holy Virgin,a daughter of the Hebrews, and said,
From you shall come forth the Saviour of all creatures.

He who is from everlasting
rested in the womb of a daughter of man without marriage,
to do away with the snares of the Serpent,
and to save Adam and his children from deceit and untruth,

Glory, honour, adoration and highest exaltation,
it is good to offer to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
One true God. To Him all praise.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 8 How great is Your Name, O Lord our God....

Response

O Lord, how glorious is Your Name, in all the earth!
You made man a little less than God.
You crowned him with glory and honour.
You made him lord of all creatures.

To You be glory, Christ the King, who descended on earth,
as the prophet had seen, like the dew on the fleece.
You are the Righteous One who made the heaven come down on earth
from the heart of the Eternal Father.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.....to the one God who is revealed in unity and believed in trinity; Being on high who is known in three persons and praised in one power; the one hidden Father who sent the new tidings to Nazareth; the one worshipful Son who dwelt in the Virgin and confirmed the tidings; the one Holy Spirit who by His descent accomplished the wonder. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Praise to You, Exalted and Lofty One, who came from the high and hidden dwelling of the Father to dwell in the womb of the humble virgin. Dweller above who when You willed to come below made a sign with Your Father secretly and stirred the angel Gabriel and sent him to go before You with power that he might announce to the Virgin concerning Your glorious conception. Glorious One who by the whisper of Your gentle command sent the Fiery One gladly to meet the pure handmaid. Heavenly Peace who commanded the Wakeful One to pass on peace to the humble Mary. Hidden One who by the Holy Spirit hallowed the dwelling place of the glorious womb of the holy Virgin before Your wondrous descent. Word Eternal who entered by the ear of the maiden and healed the ancient wound of the house of Adam.

Therefore, O Word Exalted, who for our sake were pleased to take flesh from the holy Virgin, we offer prayers and earnest supplications that on this day of the announcement of Your wondrous conception, You will bestow on us mercy and compassion and all spiritual gifts,and an abundance of good things... that we may offer praise and thanksgiving to You and through You and with You, to Your Father who sent You for the salvation of the creation and to Your Life-giving Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Lord, our Lord, when Your Godhead was moved
to descend and to be clothed with our manhood,
Gabriel flew with the peace of his Lord and sowed it
in the ear of Mary, saying to her: Peace be with you, Mary,
blessed are you among women, the Lord is with you.
From you shall come forth the Saviour of the creation.

Mary said to Gabriel: How can this be without my knowing man?
When, where and how was a virgin known to have given birth?
But the Wakeful One replied: The Holy Spirit will come
and the Power from on high will overshadow your womb.
From you shall come forth the Ancient of Ages
who will revive Adam worn out by corruption.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The ark which Moses built on Sinai,
in which he placed the tablets of the Law,
represented you, Mary, as a figure.
Your virginity was preserved when the Giver of the Law
dwelt in your womb. God-made-man came forth from you,
and made His peace to reign up to the ends of the earth.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The closed cell, sealed with the seal of the king,
in which dwelt Daniel the Just,
was a sign of you Mary who preserved your virginity
when the Saviour of the creation came forth from you.

Blessed is He who has come and is to come.
Halleluia, halleluia, Son of God, offspring of the Virgin.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....P.8

Psalm 9:1-12 I will praise You, Lord, with all my heart....

Response

We praise You, O Lord, with all our heart.
We recount Your marvels one by one.
We rejoice and exult in You. O Most High.

This is a great wonder:
the coming of Him for whom the nations waited,
as Jacob had prophesied of old.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the King on high who sent a message of peace to the Virgin, and hallowed her by the Holy Spirit and made her a sanctuary for His dwelling. To Him for His willing emptying of Himself and His humility beyond telling we offer praise, at this time of the Night Vigil..

Sun of Righteousness and Saviour of all, Christ our God, You were born of the Father without time and without beginning. Of Your own will and that of the Holy Spirit You descended from the lofty height of Your Majesty and rested and dwelt in the holy Virgin Mary. We worship and we give thanks, and with David the prophet we say: Let everything that breathes praise the Lord, because He has done a wonderful thing. Wonderful was it in truth that God should descend from heaven for the salvation of our race, earthly ones, and when He saw it fallen into sin, should send His message to the holy Virgin Mary to announce Your glorious conception. And when the angel saw her he cried with a loud voice and said: Peace be with you, full of grace, the Lord is with you,

blessed among women. Peace be with you, full of grace, living temple of the Word of God. Peace be with you, full of grace, dwelling place of the divine fire. Peace be with you, full of grace, imperishable storehouse of the heavenly bread. Peace be with you, full of grace, Mother of the Ancient of Days who was pleased to become an infant in your womb.

Therefore, we also who believe declare you blessed, while we beg and beseech you to intercede for us with God who was born of you that He may shed His graciousness and compassion upon us and make us worthy by His grace to give thanks for His salvation and to praise Him and His Father and His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

He will descend like dew on the fleece.

On the day on which Your conception is announced
to the Virgin Mary, O Only Word of God,
the Wakeful Ones on high marvel because it pleased You
to become man for the sake of Adam worn out by corruption.

He spoke to you words of peace.

The angel Gabriel descends carrying His message.
He offers peace to the Virgin Mary and says to her,
The Lord is with you, from you shall come forth
the Uniquely Beloved Son of the Exalted One.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Virgin said to the angel:
What are you saying? And who sent you to me, this poor person?
Who is your Lord? He has never seen me and does not know me.
And what you say, how is it possible?

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The angel inclined to Mary and answered her:
The Lord hidden from all, exalted above all,
He has sent me to you and told me, O Holy Virgin
that you will conceive by the Holy Spirit.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia.....P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.....P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Christ who sent Your peace
to the blessed one through Your Wakeful One,

make Your peace dwell in Your Churches,
and deliver them from the scandal of disunity.

God called Gabriel from the secret place of the Wakeful Ones
and spoke these words from on high to the Fiery One:
My Son wills to descend on earth. Go, prepare a place for Him,
with Mary, a daughter of David, and do this on your journey,
greet her with peace, that seeing you she may not be afraid,
let peace be on your lips, that she may be comforted by you.

Tell her that the Son of God is to come forth from her womb.
Wear a white veil on your head that she may have no fear.
Do not strike her with dumbness like Zechariah.
Speak to her tenderly, make your announcement gently.
When she asks how this will be, answer with sweetness:
The Holy Spirit will come. God's power will overshadow you.

The Fiery One received the message and flew swiftly to Mary.
Peace to you, Daughter of David, he said,
The Lord is with you, blessed among women.
You shall receive a wonderful conception,`
and bring forth the Saviour of the creation.
And as she received this announcement from the Fiery One,
the great power from on high overshadowed her and dwelt in her womb.

Glory to the Exalted One who humbled Himself
for the sake of the race of the earthly ones,
to raise us from our fall, from the dunghill of our humiliation.
To Him be glory, and to His Father our adorations
To the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.
And on us His graciousness and His love for ever. Amen. Amen.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ....P.6

Trisagion Holy are You , O God....P.6

MEDITATION

Sunday
of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

God Most High and beyond all human comprehension, who according to Your Economy for our salvation made Your dwelling in the Virgin Mary and visited Your forerunner in the barren womb of Elizabeth, his mother; do You, Lord, visit us with Your gifts, that we may praise You with reverence and holy awe, and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 48 (47) The Lord is great and worthy to be praised.

Response

Seeing the young Virgin, Elizabeth was seized with reverence.
Advancing to greet her she cried out, trembling:
How is it that she who is the most blessed among women
and the glory of the whole creation comes to visit me?
Your greeting has caused the child to stir in my womb.
He rejoices in your Son and cries and says:
You are blessed for ever, God of our fathers,
who make Yourself to be felt by us.

Elizabeth cried out: By what words can I succeed
in declaring the mysteries which are accomplished in you?
By you is cancelled the account written by Eve our mother.
By you is brought to an end the sentence which said:
In sorrow shall children be born into this world.
I revere your womb. And to Him who dwells in it I cry and say:
You are blessed for ever, God of our fathers,
who make Yourself to be felt by us.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us....P.3

Response

Today the Virgin Mary went to the mountain of Judah
to greet Elizabeth the daughter of Aaron
who was barren and well on in years.

Elizabeth, the daughter of the Levites,
was filled with the Holy Spirit and said to Mary,
Blessed be the Son of the Father who dwells in you.

The old woman said to the young:
God's blessing is on you above all women.
Blessed is the fruit of your womb,
the Lord, the Creator of all things.

Blessed are you, little child, who while in the womb
were judged worthy to receive the visit of your Lord.
Pray for us that we may be worthy
to be visited by the abundance of His gifts.

Glory to You, Son of the Most High,
who descended into the womb of Mary
and went to the house of Zechariah, the priest,
to greet Your servant, John,
and he greeted You from within the womb of his mother.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts.. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to Him who is without flesh yet became flesh that He might give us a spiritual birth by His grace. He whom the heights and the depths cannot contain is carried by the Virgin to Elizabeth in the mountain of Judah. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Christ our God, perfect image of the Father of perfection, in Your love of humankind You descended from heaven and were incarnate of the Holy Spirit and of the Holy Virgin Mary, that You might redeem our race from the enslavement to sin. While You are without bounds, on

high and in every place, today in the womb of Your Mother You went to Elizabeth. With her let us cry and say to the Holy Virgin: Blessed are you among women in that the Power from on high descended upon you. Blessed are you among women in that the Heavenly King dwelt in you. Blessed are you among women in that Gabriel the archangel announced to you your conception. Blessed are you among women in that He whom Zechariah called the Rising Sun from heaven, dawned upon us from you. Blessed are you among women in that the Eternal Child who is hidden in the heart of the Father, through you was manifested and appeared to us. Blessed are you among women in that all generations will call you blessed.

Therefore we sinners beseech the Lord who came forth from you, while we say: By the intercession of Your Blessed Mother, Lord, receive this incense which Your worshippers offer to You, and by Your grace be a guardian to Your Churches and a support to their pastors. Make holy their priests and give honour to their deacons. Give peace to our rulers and strengthen all those who work or suffer for justice. Pardon sinners and heal the sick. And to the departed believers give rest and the resurrection to the new life and a place at Your right hand, and we will praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Today the Daughter of David, the Blessed Mary,
goes to the mountain of Judah to greet Elizabeth,
carrying in her chaste womb the Living Lamb of God,
who by a gesture rules the whole creation,
and carries heaven and earth.
Glory to Him who in His love comes to greet His forerunner.

When Elizabeth, the daughter of the Levites,
hears the holy and pure greeting of the Virgin Mary,
John taken with great joy leaps in the presence of his Lord,
feeling Him whom the Winged Creatures carry, dwelling in her womb.
From within the bounds of the womb
he offers adorations to Him as due to the Divinity.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit
lifts up her voice and says to Mary, the chaste Virgin:
God's blessing is on you above all women
and blessed is the fruit of your womb.
Who am I, that the Mother of my Lord should visit me?
Glory to the Son, the Noble One,
who comes to visit His servant.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Who can describe the humility of the Son of God,
holy like His Father and who according to His will
descended and dwelt in the Virgin, the Daughter of David,
for the salvation of our race? We thank Him
who was pleased to give joy to her who was barren,
by giving her a child, and ascended the mountain of Judah
to visit His servant in his house.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

O True Peace, in order to put an end to the conflict
between the higher and the lower powers,
You ascended the mountain of Judah to visit Your forerunner,
and by the greeting of Your Mother
You rejoiced all the Levites.

By the perfume of this incense
which we offer to Your Majesty give us peace,
and stretch out Your right hand full of love
on the children of Your Church.
Grant to all the departed believers
the dwelling of Your Kingdom
that we may glorify You from age to age and for ever.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Christ who ascended the mountains of Judah to visit Your servant,
give joy to Your Church and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity,
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

Mary, a cloud full of life, arose and went
to quench the thirst of the thirsty earth which bears fruit.
The King was seated in His chariot full of majesty,
to go in earnestness and visit His servant.

The young maiden whispered in the ear of the aged woman.
Her word glided in and awakened the Preacher of Truth.
A stirring took hold of him as he was filled with gladness,
like David the Son of Jesse who danced before the ark.

In the sixth month when the souls of children are silent,
John in great joy danced in the womb of his mother.
He felt his Lord dwelling in her womb like a son of man
and he offered Him adorations as due to the Divinity.

Glory to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Adoration to the Son who visited His servant in earnestness.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit by whom the infant in the womb
was made to stir in the presence of his Lord,
and was filled with joy and intense gladness.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia , halleluia, halleluia.
Listen and rejoice, O Jerusalem,
exult, Daughter of Judah,
love and truth have met,
justice and peace have embraced.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

The Lord's dealings with us are wonderful.
Let us tell out the greatness of the Lord
and the wonders of His great deeds.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 1:39-56 The visitation of Mary to Elizabeth.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer all together with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who today went with Your Mother to share with Elizabeth and her son the joy of Your coming, make Your Churches true communities of sharing; not only in Your own divine gifts but also in the good things and the joys of this world, with all those who are in need, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who revealed Your coming into this world by the works of Your Holy Spirit, fill Your Churches with His power and bring them together in eucharistic communion, fellowship in Your Gospel, with simplicity of life, community living, in commitment to overcome world poverty and to work for the liberation of the downtrodden, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who marked the beginning of Your Economy of Salvation with great signs, prompt Your Church to reveal herself as the sacrament of salvation, the great sign of our hope, in a dynamic process of self-realization and of commitment to the world community, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Christ our God, send Your Holy Spirit on the thirsty ground of our hearts and gladden us with His promptings, as John when he stirred in the darkness of the womb, that while rejoicing in the contemplation of Your great works for us, we may truly bear fruits of life in Your Church and in the world, we beseech You and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.... P. 1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy!Lord,..... P. 1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord..... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you..... P.7

Response

By night we offer praise to Your Lordship
for the light and truth that comes to us
through all Your commandments.

Praise to You from the spiritual ones
who minister to Your Lordship.
May we also, earthly ones, be worthy to praise You with them.

Mary, the daughter of David, set out,
carrying in her womb the Living Lamb of God
to give the greeting of peace to Elizabeth.

Elizabeth, the aged woman, heard the greeting of the Virgin Mary,
and the infant in the womb of his mother leapt for joy,
giving the greeting of peace to his Lord who was visiting him.

Glory to the Beloved Son
who even from the womb filled with the Holy Spirit
John, the son of Zechariah, to prepare the way before Him.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 16 (15) Preserve me, God, I take refuge in You.

Response

O Lord, it is You who are our portion and our cup.
It is You Yourself who are our reward.
The lot marked out by You for us is our delight,
welcome indeed, the prize that comes to us.

To You be praise and to You thanksgiving, adorable Father
without beginning, who spoke through the prophets
to the old generations of our fathers, but in this last age
You spoke to us through Your Well-beloved Son.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise....to the Merciful One who in His love descended from the heights above and appeared in the womb of the Daughter of David, and ascended the mountain of Judah and gave joy to Elizabeth the kinswoman of his Mother. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Praise to You, Child eternal and beyond all human comprehension, Saviour of our race and Restorer of our nature who in Your love descended from the throne of Your glory for our salvation, and were clothed in humility, and put on the form of a servant that You might deliver us in our misery and bring us to the worship in spirit and in truth, the worship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. You who fashion children in the womb of their mother, You formed Yourself in a womb of flesh. You who cause the winds to blow amid the clouds were conceived in the womb of a virgin. Like a son of man You ascended to the house of Your servant and gladdened those who were barren by the sight of You, and filled the mountain of Judah with happiness and rejoicing.

And we, with the orders of fire and spirit, cry and say: Exalt the Lord our God and worship the footstool of His feet, who comforted His priests by His appearance and filled them with good hope. And with them we also pour out our prayers and present petitions and with the lifting up of hands we draw near and say: May Your tenderness, Lord, be moved upon us and Your grace protect us, and Your strength strengthen us, and Your teaching enlighten our hearts and deliver us from evil. We offer praise and thanksgiving to You and through You and with You, to Your Father who sent You for our salvation and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Today the Virgin Mary, the daughter of David,

set out and went to the uplands of Judah to greet Elizabeth.
And behold, the fair infant of the barren leapt for joy,
when he felt his Lord dwelling in the Virgin.

When Elizabeth received Mary's graceful greeting
she cried aloud, filled with the Holy Spirit,
He who is in your womb is the Holy One,
the child himself in my womb makes known His greatness.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to the Mighty One who lowered the heights of His majesty
and came to dwell in Mary for our salvation.
He visited His preacher and within the womb received worship, He
whom the Winged Creatures worship and honour in the highest heaven.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Let us praise and worship Him who out of love
descended for the sake of Adam worn out by corruption.
He whom the Winged Creatures carry in state,
a young maiden bears Him,
the Lord of all creatures, on a visit to His servant.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P. 8

Psalm 20 (19) May the Lord answer in time of trial....

Response

We sing aloud in praise of Your victory.
We do homage to the name of the Lord.
The Lord has given victory to His Anointed,
the mighty victory of His right hand.
Our trust is in the name of the Lord.

Glory to You, Invisible Being,
who lowered Yourself to become man,

and accomplished the prophecies made beforehand
concerning Your coming, and fulfilled the expectations
of the kings and the prophets and the priests.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord. Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise.. to the Hidden One to whom the ranks of Fiery Ones offer clear cries of 'holy', and the old daughter of Aaron pours forth abundant blessings, to the Everlasting Light which gives light to every one who comes into the world, and by the light of whose grace His forerunner was filled with joy and gladness in the womb. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Praise to You, and thanksgiving to You, Word who are God by a true generation, and for our sake appeared on the earth in order to give strength to the weakness of our human nature, and heal our diseases of soul and body, and gather us together and restore us to the place of life, our former inheritance, and present us to Your Father. You are He who from the beginning give release to those who are bound, and raise up those who are bowed from of old, and from generation to generation give fruit to those who are barren. You raised up and renewed Zechariah and Elizabeth when they were bowed down with old age and weakness. You caused them to give birth to the Preacher of Truth. You sent him, the friend of the Bridegroom, to prepare Your saving coming, the lamp which goes before Your great manifestation, the star which goes before You, O Sun of Righteousness. Because grace filled him he danced a great dance before You, Saviour of all, within the womb of his mother, announcing Your salvation before he was born. With him we also, with pure mind, cry and say: Who is like You, Lord our God, who descended from on high to the depths that You might restore us to the worship of Yourself and of Your Father and of Your Holy Spirit?

Therefore we offer You, Lord, by the intercession of Your Mother and of John Your messenger, our prayers and supplications. Do not deprive us of Your grace. Look upon us with the eye of graciousness which is natural to You, that we may offer You, Christ our God, our songs as the fruits of our lips, and our love, the burnt-offering of our hearts, and to Your Father and to Your Blessed Spirit who is like You in Your essential nature, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Mary, the Daughter of David, went to Elizabeth,
carrying her fruit in the womb, the Lord of all creatures.
As she greeted Elizabeth , John danced to greet his Lord.
The servant saw his Lord coming and worshipped before Him.
Blessed is He to whom even the infants in the womb
offer worship, halleluia, and confess His Divinity.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting,
she was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied saying:
Blessed is the fruit of your womb, O blessed among all women.
Blessed are you who became Mother to the Creator of the worlds.
Behold, God the Word dwells in your womb, halleluia,
He who willed to become flesh.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to You, O Lover of Humankind, Saviour of the world,
Word, Well-beloved of God who were seen in the flesh
like a son of man and went to visit Your servant
who, while in the womb, was filled with joy at the encounter,
not realizing his impotence from the intensity of his feeling,
until he willed to be humbled in the same way for Your love.
Halleluia, glory to Him who sent You.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

He whom the Living Creatures carry and dare not look at,
and from whose brilliance the six winged Fiery Ones hide,
dwelt in the Virgin and she was not consumed.
He went to the house of His servant as a son of man.
When the aged woman heard the greeting from the blessed one,
the child in her womb leapt for joy to greet his Lord,
halleluia, halleluia.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us
by the prayer of Mary who brought You forth.

By the prayer of her who loved You so much,
be gracious to Your people and to the whole world.

The Daughter of David set out and hastened
to see the aged woman, the daughter of Aaron.
Although she set out by herself,
another one was with her on the journey.

When Elizabeth heard the greeting of the blessed one,
she was filled with the Holy Spirit
and the baby in her womb leapt for joy.

Glorious was the peace which Mary
the virgin daughter of David,
gave to the barren daughter of Aaron,
that the babe in her womb danced for joy.

Glory to the Mighty and Hidden One
who lowered the heights of His majesty.
He descended to a state of lowliness and received worship in the womb.
To His Father all honour and adoration,
and to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels.....P. 15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ....P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You , O God....P. 6

MEDITATION

Sunday
of the Birth of John the Baptist
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

Praise to Your watchfulness, O Wakeful One who do not sleep. Thanksgiving for Your tenderness, O Light which is not quenched. Enlighten our hearts that we may know You and rejoice in Your revelation by the prayer of Your preacher, Saint John, whose memory we celebrate today. And make us worthy to keep Your festival in purity which may be pleasing to You, our Lord and our God, for ever. Amen.

Psalm 92(91) It is good to give thanks to the Lord...

Response

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to make music to Your name, O Most High,
to proclaim Your love in the morning
and Your truthfulness in the watches of the night.

From long ages the human race
was plunged in the darkness of untruth,
and behold, there appears a messenger who cries:
You are blessed, Lord, the Strong, God of our fathers.

All the world which was grieving and downcast
recovered its spirit at your glorious birth
from the barren woman, as the messenger cried out:
You are blessed, Lord, the Strong, God of our fathers.

On this day of the birth of the Preacher of Truth
the Churches rejoice and sing praise.
They offer thanksgiving with their children
in the four quarters of the earth.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

Christ, we offer You this evening service,
the spiritual service which we fulfil,
because by Your incarnation for us, in Your graciousness,
You were pleased to have pity and compassion on us.

As You untied the tongue of Zechariah the priest,
at the birth of the Preacher of Truth,
untie the bonds of sin
in the souls of Your worshippers who supplicate Your Divinity.

As you rejoiced Zechariah by the birth of the Preacher of Truth,
gladden us also, O our Saviour,
and remove from us all harm and evil
that we may praise You for Your goodness.

Praise to You, Lord, from all that belongs to You,
O Word who shone forth from the Father
and made the nations who were groping for the truth
turn away from their wanderings and enter the path of life.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise.....

Praise....to the King of glory who by His grace chose His preacher and by his Birth gave joy to Zechariah and Elizabeth. To Him who from His mother's womb chose John, we offer praise, honour and thanksgiving, at this time of evening....

Who can render in earthly paints the beauty of your greatness, beloved child, whose conception was announced by an angel, while dumbness held the tongue of your father as he doubted of your birth? O great prophet to whom was made known the mystery of his Lord from the womb of your mother. New grape which appeared on the old stock and gave joy with your wine to the souls of those who were dejected. Young man born of the aged and barren to make the renewal of the creation. Great among those born of women who proclaimed the lofty greatness of the Most High and He descended to empty Himself. Shining Star

who reveal the True Morning. Joyous Morning who make known the Glorious Day. Fair Lamp who manifest the Unique Light. Temporal Moon who herald the Eternal Sun. Today Zechariah rejoices because the bond of his tongue is loosened and the barren woman gives thanks because her long expectation is fulfilled. Today two wondrous births are manifested to the world: a new birth from a barren womb and a new voice from the mouth of Zechariah.

Therefore we beseech you that by your intercession on our behalf you will loosen and remove from us all, the ancient fetters of sin. Beg humbly of the Lord that He may breathe His grace which does wonders on the inner being of His Churches and enrich the barren shoots of the trees, which we are, with the fruits of our sharing in His Divine Being. And now with Zechariah your father whose tongue was loosened by your birth, we give thanks, and with Elizabeth whose barrenness was ended by your conception we sing praise to the Child of Wonder before whom you danced in the womb of your mother, and to His Hidden Father who made you the messenger of His Beloved and to the Holy Spirit with whom you were filled when you were in the womb, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The words which Gabriel spoke to Zechariah in the temple
concerning the child of Elizabeth are accomplished.
The barren woman has brought forth in her old age.
Zechariah rejoices at his birth and today
the Churches celebrate in tones full of thanksgiving
the Son who sent before Him His messenger to prepare His way.

In the mountain of Judah the news spreads.
Zechariah the holy priest has a son.
Elizabeth lifts up her voice in praise and joyous exultation.
She is full of gladness because her hope has been fulfilled.
Blessed is He who gives joy to the barren
by the birth of the Preacher of Truth.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The priest Zechariah offers praise, thanksgiving and adoration
because the bond of his tongue is loosened.

His mouth is filled with praise because the preacher
who will prepare the way for the Good News is born.
Blessed is the child who without marriage was born in virginity
and brought joy to heaven and earth which offer Him praise.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed is he who by his birth gave joy to the priest.
The old man before he descended to Sheol saw the fruit,
and his heart was full of joy. And he led the child into the desert
that he should grow spiritually.
Glory to God who chose the Preacher of Truth and said:
There is none like him among the children of men.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

John, the messenger and forerunner,
you are the sower of peace in the desert
and the preacher of calm in the wilderness
who turned the people from untruth to the truth.

Pray to Him who was divinely proclaimed by you
that He may receive this incense
which we offer on the day of your birth,
and that He may make us turn away from evil
and do that which is good.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Christ who gave joy to the priest in his old age
by the birth of the Preacher of Truth,
give joy to Your Church whom You betrothed to Yourself in the water.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

Mary remained three months with Elizabeth.
The time had come for her to bring forth the Preacher of Truth.
The sheep comes and casts herself before the Lioness
and asks her to give strength to her weakness.

Go forth, strong one, depart from here, that I may bring forth.
Your majesty puts to flight the lamb of Sion.
Go forth, you who bear the lion-cub at peace in your dwelling.
On account of Him the lamb in my womb fears to be born.

When the time came for the Word to be manifested,
He gave orders to the Voice which came to birth as it is said.
He gave fruit to the old woman and fulfilled her hope.
He gave joy to her who brought forth a fruit
which satisfied her long desire.

Glory to the Father who gives fruit to the barren.
Adoration to the Son who chose to make the Church His bride.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who gave joy to the priest
and put an end to his dumbness.
He pours out on us His tenderness by the prayers of the just
who are the ministers of His mysteries.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Mount Sion rejoices
and the daughters of Judah leap for joy.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Elizabeth gives birth to a son,
and all the people rejoice with her.
The Lord's dealings with us are wonderful.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 1:57-66 The Birth of John the Baptist.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer all together with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who through the birth of the Preacher of Truth rejoiced Zechariah and Elizabeth and all their neighbours, give us to rejoice in all Your gifts, and to share them with all, rejoicing with all those who rejoice, and mourning with all those who are afflicted, we beseech You.

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who closed the lips of the priest Zechariah for his unbelief and opened them on the day of the birth of his son, set us free from the fetters of unbelief, and open our minds and hearts to the deifying mysteries of Your Economy of Salvation, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who marked the beginning of Your Economy of Salvation with great wonders, prompt Your Church to reveal herself as the sacrament of salvation, the great sign of our hope, in a dynamic process of self-realization and of commitment to the world community, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N....Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Fill up, Lord, the dark valleys of our hearts with true faith, bring low the mountains and hills of our self-love and pride, straighten the crooked roads of our wills running after fleeting pleasures, and smoothen the rough ways of our life of dissipation, so that our barren souls may bring forth fruits of repentance, and we may see Your salvation, by the intercession of the Preacher of Truth, we beseech You and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6.

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1.

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy!Lord,..... P.1.

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7.

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.....P.7.

Response

By night we offer praise to Your Lordship
for the light and the steadfastness
of all Your commandments.

Praise to You whose Lordship is served by the spiritual ones.
Make us worthy, the earthly ones,
also to praise You with their companies.

The Preacher of Truth is born to the aged and barren Elizabeth.
From the barren womb comes forth the Voice
who is to proclaim the Kingdom before his Lord.

Zechariah the priest whose tongue is untied at the birth of his son
offers praise and prophesies
that he will be the Prophet of the Most High.

We offer praise to the Father
and thanksgiving to the Son nearest to His heart
and to the Holy Spirit. One power, one authority and lordship.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 21 (20) O Lord, Your strength gives joy to the king.....

Response

The King has put his trust in the Lord;
through the mercy of the Most High he shall stand firm.

You have granted Your blessing to him for ever.
You have made him rejoice with the joy of Your presence.

He for whom the just were longing, in whose hope the saints died,
whom the prophets saw from afar
and whose coming to the world they ardently desired,
behold, He descends like rain on the earth all athirst for Him.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Splendid and Glorious One who is lofty in His nature and who inclined Himself in His compassion and filled the barren with His grace, and from those who were grown old caused to be born a voice to announce His coming and a shining lamp to manifest Him. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Glory to You, True Offspring, hidden and invisible, who are born from the hidden Father eternally, who when You were pleased to be seen upon the earth performed great wonders. When the time came when You were pleased to come forth from the Virgin, You were seen as a child in the womb and You sent a voice before You. Today Elizabeth's sorrow of her barrenness is removed as she finds joy in her child. Today Zechariah exults with joy because the bond of his tongue is loosened. Today the prophets rejoice because the prophet who proclaimed their Lord is joined to them. Today the apostles exult because there is counted among them he who announced the Kingdom of God. Today the martyrs are glad because the great martyr in the conflict is joined to their number. Today all the creation with one consent say the words: How great are Your doings, O Lord!

We also give thanks for Your compassion, because when we were not, You brought us into being. When we were taken captive, You redeemed us. When we were fallen into corruption You renewed us, and when we were lost, You sought and found us. For all these things which You have done and which You do for us, we offer praise and honour to You, Lord, and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

On the birth of John the Preacher of Truth,
closed doors are opened for the barren gives birth

and the tongue of his father is loosened.
They give praise to the Lord of all creatures.
Halleluia, praise to Him for His grace,
and for His great love for His creation.

On the mountain of Judah new things happen,
on the day of the birth of the Preacher of Truth.
Praise to Him who gladdened the barren
by giving her to bear a child to Zechariah.
Halleluia, glory to You, Son of the Most High,
who sent the Voice before Your coming.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Zechariah the priest offers praise and thanksgiving
when his son John is born.
He sees that all that the Fiery One had spoken to him,
in the sanctuary has come true.
Halleluia, blessed is He who rejoiced Zechariah
and gladdened the barren with a son.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Let us bless and praise the Word, the Well-beloved of God,
who gave fruit to the barren
and filled her with the Holy Spirit.
He sent her son to preach before Himself.
He betrothed the Church to Himself.
Halleluia, blessed is He who saved His spouse
by the blood and water from His side.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.....P.8

Psalm 24 (23) The Lord's is the earth and its fullness....

Response
Who shall go up the mountain of the Lord?
And who shall stand in His holy place?
The man with clean hands and a pure heart,
who has not set his mind on worthless things.

The messengers of the Heavenly King were sent from heaven,
they filled Judah with awe.
They stirred Persia with their songs
and invited the peoples and tribes to come to honour Him.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise.... to Him who consoles the sorrowing and is the hope of all the ends of the earth; who by the birth of the Preacher of Truth comforted Zechariah the priest, and gave joy to Elizabeth the barren daughter of the Levites. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

When we meditate on Your incarnation and Your being brought to nothing, O Word of God, and consider the unspeakable riches of the benefits You bestow on us in the redemption of our race, we offer unceasing praise and thanksgiving for Your grace so full of tenderness and compassion. For You sent the holy prophets before Your coming like heralds and each of them announced the hidden and wondrous mystery of Your coming in the flesh. One of them prophesied: Behold, the Lord will come to comfort those who mourn in Sion. Another declared: Behold, the Lord will make a covenant with His people. One prayed: Let God come and not be silent. Another besought: Reveal Your strength and come for our salvation. One prophesied about Your messenger, John, and said that he was an angel; another spoke of him as a voice in the wilderness. When You had revealed Your saving coming to all the holy men in a mystery, You sent John the Baptist before Your coming, between the old and the new covenant, a star before the Light, a lamp before the Sun of Righteousness, a voice before the Word, a preacher who preached to the people openly: After me there will come One who is mightier than I. I am not even worthy to loose the strap of His sandals. He it was who was found worthy to baptise You, Lamb of God who take away the sins of the world. He it was of whom it was declared by You that there is none greater among those born of women.

He it is of whom, while we keep his holy memory, we beseech You, Lord our God, that You will forgive the sins of Your inheritance redeemed by Your precious blood. Make us worthy to praise Your name and to have a place at Your right hand, and we will offer praise and

thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Today John, the son of the Levites, is born from the barren.
Zechariah, his father speaks and reveals the mystery.
Glory to the Beloved Son who with regard to His manifestation
filled him with the Holy Spirit and sent him before Himself
to prepare the way of the Kingdom.

A wonder in the mountain of Judah
and rejoicing in the house of the Levites,
for the preacher and messenger of the Son is born,
and the dumbness of his father is removed,
which was inflicted on him by the angel when he disbelieved.
And he praises God in the Spirit who gladdened him with a progeny.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to the Beloved Son who lowered Himself for our sake
and became man in His goodness for our salvation.
And He sent ahead of Himself the messenger
to announce His coming:
After me comes the Holy One, the Lord of the creation.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Zechariah rejoices at the birth of John, the son of his old age,
for his tongue is loosened which the Wakeful One had tied,
when he doubted concerning the conception of Elizabeth
who was well advanced in years.
There is great joy for all the children with her.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory.....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P. 9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Lord, be gracious to us by the prayer of Saint John.

By the prayer of Saint John, O Compassionate One,
be gracious to Your people and to the whole world.

When the time arrived for the renewal of our race
which had grown old on account of corruption,
wonders happened and mighty deeds were seen,
old and barren parents, nearing their end, became young.

Today Zechariah the priest offers a new praise
to the Life-giving Lamb of God who humbled Himself to a lowly state
and gave him the Preacher of Truth
who is to go to prepare the way before his Lord.

In mystic parables and allegories,
the prophets and seers depicted the manifestation of the Beloved Son.
Who comes and appears in the world to redeem
and to restore fully Adam who was lost.

From the vine a branch has sprouted
and produced a sweet cluster of grapes.
A shoot was planted in the depths, which fruited after it had dried up
and those who saw it marvelled at the sweet and fair fruit.

Glory to You , Christ the King,
who came and saved the creation.
And to Your Father and Your Holy Spirit,
our adorations, all honour and exaltation.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P. 15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ.... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P. 6

MEDITATION

Sunday
of the Revelation to Joseph
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Christ our God, to stand before You in reverence and to believe in Your birth from a daughter of David, like Joseph the Just, though he had doubted, and with him we will answer and say: You are God in truth with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 57(56) Have mercy on me, God, have mercy....

Response

Be gracious to us, O God, be gracious,
as we turn to You at this evening hour,
when the shadows of doubt get hold of our hearts,
as they seized Joseph, and You sent Your word to him.

God filled Mary with His gifts.
He chose her and took her from the holy temple
that she might be His Mother and that through her
He might be clothed with a body. Let us all cry and say:
You are blessed, Lord, God of our fathers.

Joseph was troubled at the conception of Mary.
But at night, as he had gone to sleep in perplexity,
an angel descended and reassured him saying:
He who is in the womb of Mary
is the Saviour of all, the God of our fathers.

You who by Gabriel strengthened the faith of Joseph the Just
who was perplexed by Mary's conception,
and by Your birth filled the world with light,
be gracious to us, O God, be gracious.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us....P.3

Response

Gabriel the Wakeful One manifested himself to Joseph
who was troubled at the glorious conception of Mary
and reassured him: Do not be troubled, Joseph,
He who dwells in her is the Saviour of the world.

By the revelation of the angel, Joseph believed
that the conception of the Virgin was of the Holy Spirit.
The Church and her people rejoice at the birth of her Son,
and sing praise to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

While Joseph was perplexed the angel descended beside him
and explained that Mary had conceived of the Holy Spirit.
Behold, all the nations rejoice, exult and offer praise
to the Father , the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Glory, honour, adoration and exaltation,
to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
on this festival of the commemoration of the divine conception
which today is manifested to Joseph by means of an angel.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise ..to the Eternal Child who, when Joseph was perplexed by His glorious conception, confirmed him by Gabriel the head of the angels, and made known to him that Mary's conception was from the Holy Spirit. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

O the depth of Wisdom Unsearchable! O Wondrous Miracle! How the Lord came to visit His servant by His grace. Joseph wondered, and fear took hold of him when he saw virginity untouched and a conception taking place in Mary's flesh. While he was divided whether to keep her or to send her away and could not decide, sleep overtook him as he was disturbed in mind upon his bed. The Wakeful One made a secret sign and descended and came to remove the doubt from him: Peace be with

you and with the whole world! Do not doubt, son of Jacob. That which dwells in Mary is of the Holy Spirit, and shall be called the Son of the Most High. The just man believed in the revelation and gave thanks with joy and rose up and worshipped before the Virgin, saying: Peace be with you, Holy Virgin, Ark of the Lord. O the wondrous revelation which was made known by the Wakeful One to me! This is a divine revelation. The head of the heavenly powers has made it known and the Holy Spirit who reveals what is concealed has declared it. This is a revelation from God, which the Holy Father sent by His messenger and which the Beloved Son has accomplished for the fulfilment of His Economy. This is a revelation from God, for which those above and those below give praise, and thanksgiving is sung by the whole body of the Church.

For this we beseech You, Merciful Lord, bestow upon us the abiding presence of Your loving kindness. Be a comforter to those who are in distress, a protector to the weak and the poor, a guide to the righteous, the liberator of those in bondage, the confirmer of those who are perplexed and a helper to those who are oppressed, and make us all worthy with Your saints to praise You and Your Father who sent You for our salvation and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Who can describe Your grace, O Word, Beloved Son of the Father,
who according to Your good pleasure came to be conceived
and dwelt in the womb of the pure Virgin Mary, daughter of David.
Joseph was perplexed at Your divine conception,
but he received the revelation of Your secrets from the angel.
Glory to Your power, O Dispeller of all doubts.

Mysteriously the prophets had announced Your manifestation.
At the end of time the words of Your seers were accomplished.
From the Virgin, without her knowing marriage,
Emmanuel becomes incarnate.
You are conceived without breaking the seal of Your Mother.
And that which was hidden from Joseph You reveal in a dream.
Glory to Your power, O Dispeller of all perplexity.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Blessed be Christ who came at the end of time
to accomplish the mysteries of the prophets and seers.

He dwells in the womb of a daughter of David,
the humble virgin clothed with great beauty.
He reveals Himself to Joseph: Do not be afraid concerning Mary.
She is with child of the Holy Spirit, she remains a virgin.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Joseph the Just thought to send Mary secretly away
because he saw her with child.
But during the night, while he slept,
an angel visited him and said to him:
Son of David, have no suspicion concerning Mary.
That which she carries in her womb shall deliver the creation.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Christ our God, Word of the Heavenly Father,
when You became man without change for our sake,
through the head of the angels You confirmed Joseph the Just
who doubted in his mind concerning Your divine conception.

By this fragrant incense which we offer to Your Godhead,
confirm also our minds in the true faith
and in the keeping of Your holy commandments,
our Lord and our God, for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who sent an angel to confirm Joseph the Just,
confirm us all in that faith which leaves no place for doubt.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

There appeared an edict ordering everyone
to register his name for the census, each in his place.
The Adam of Eden went to register His name
in the great city of the garden of joys. The Lord wrote His name,
He registered in His place among His acquaintances.

In the land of Judah an edict was proclaimed:
Let everyone be registered for the tax collection.
The collectors came to Joseph, the husband of Mary,
telling him to go and sign his name in the city of David.

He took Mary, the Holy Virgin,
and went to be registered as it had been prescribed.
The King comes to the royal city to manifest Himself
and to inscribe the names in the Book of Life of His family.

Glory to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Adoration to the Son born in the flesh from a daughter of David.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who sent the Wakeful Ones to sing:
Glory ! To the King born in the flesh all praise!

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Of old God spoke with the just in visions:
I will give help to all in their weakness.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
To Mary He sent His message through an angel.
To Joseph His word was conveyed in a dream.
To us He speaks by His Son.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Matthew 1:18-25 The Revelation to Joseph the Just.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who enlightened the mind of Joseph the Just to accept the mystery of Your divine incarnation, when he was perplexed at the conception of the Virgin Mary, confirm us all in the dedication of our lives to You, in faith and love, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who revealed Your coming into this world by the works of Your Holy Spirit, fill Your Churches with His power, and make them grow together in the same hope and confidence into one visible Church, Your body, until God is all in all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who marked the beginning of Your Economy of Salvation with great wonders, prompt Your Church to reveal herself as the Sacrament of Salvation, the great sign of hope, in a dynamic process of self-realization and of service to the world community, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Make us worthy to honour Your birth for our salvation with a true faith, free from all doubt, and to bless You and praise Your love for humankind, Christ our true God, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord have mercy . Lord have Mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.....P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy!Lord,..... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.....P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and people on earth cry: Holy! Holy! to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

We have risen at night to come into Your presence.
We bless You and glorify You, and beg for mercy from You.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Today the angel descends and appears to Joseph
who was perplexed at the conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
He reveals to him that it is by the Holy Spirit.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to the one in three and the three are one,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him be praise, honour and adoration for ever.
And on us His love and compassion.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 26(25) Give judgement for me, O Lord...

Response

Examine us, O God, and test us.
Put our hearts and our minds to the proof.
Judge our desires and our thoughts.
It is Your love, unfailing, which is our guide,
Your faithfulness leads us;
make us walk according to Your truth.

Glorious is Your incarnation,
O Word of the Father, Effulgence of His Being,
who were manifested from Him before the worlds.
You who are from everlasting, dwelt in the womb,
as You willed to make us Your children,
Our Lord who became flesh and dwelt with us.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise.....to the Lord, the Saviour of all, who when Joseph the Just did not understand about the divine conception of Mary and was seized with anxiety and dismay, sent Gabriel the archangel to heal the doubt in his heart and to strengthen the hearts of those who do not believe. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ our God, by the glorious mystery of Your Economy You give light to the world, and by wonders worthy of God You cause the creation to marvel. When Joseph, who was called by grace Your father, was taken with amazement and doubt in his mind, You did not deprive the just man of the great mystery of Your Economy. You sent Gabriel...who appeared to him in a dream and said to him: Do not be in doubt Joseph. Mary, your betrothed, is bearing God in her virginity. I announced it to her...She is preserved in her virginity and is greater than the Holy Winged Creatures. When after the angel's departure Joseph awoke, he said: I worship you, mother and handmaid and nurse of God, and I glorify the Son, Christ, in your womb. I worship you, blessed among women, new

heaven which is higher than that which existed in the beginning. I give glory, I and all humankind, to the Glorious Trinity, one true God.

Therefore, by His grace, may He bestow exaltation on His Holy Church, and protection on her people, and peace and tranquillity on all the inhabited world. And may He call the believers who died and give them a place at His right hand. And may we and they offer praise to Christ who took flesh for our sake, and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Because He knows the thoughts of the heart.

When Joseph saw that Mary was with child,
he was seized with anxiety, struck with dismay,
for he knew Mary to be the virgin all pure.
He considered dismissing her in secret, without exposing her
or suggesting false assumptions concerning her purity.
Halleluia, glory to Him who strengthened Joseph in his trial.

Evening, filled with sorrow, but morning, with joy

As darkness was falling he decided that the next morning
he would save peace but set the marriage contract aside.
But at night, as he fell asleep,
the head of the angels descended to his side and said to him:
Be at peace, Joseph, do not be anxious about Mary.
She has conceived the Saviour of the world by the Spirit.
Halleluia, halleluia.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Mary set to prayer, offering supplication to God
that He would reveal to Joseph, son of Jacob,
the mystery that was between her and the Wakeful One.
At night, while he was sleeping, the Wakeful One came to him
and revealed that Mary was truly virgin
and her son, the Saviour of the world. Halleluia, halleluia.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Having been told, by the angel
about the Virgin's conception of the Holy Spirit,
Joseph awoke and rose full of joy and worshipped Mary:
I revere your purity, O Sealed Sanctuary,
Bride of the Holy Spirit, Mother Divine.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.....P.8

Psalm 28(27) To You, O Lord, I call...

Response

Blessed be the Lord, for He has heard my cry for mercy.
The Lord is my strength and my shield.
In Him my heart trusts.
I was helped and my heart rejoices
and I praise Him with my whole being.

You were above in the heights
near the Father who has no beginning
and You descended on earth,
lowering Yourself like the mortal ones.
Glory to You who humbled Yourself.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise.....

Praise.... to Him whose Godhead hidden and concealed is revealed in His incarnation. He was conceived in the holy flesh of her who bore Him without partnership of man. Praise to Him who saved and delivered Joseph.....from his scruple of doubt by the revelation of the messenger of peace. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Praise to You and thanksgiving to You, Self-Existent Child of the Eternal Father, who were born eternally from Him beyond the comprehension of every mind. When You were pleased, O Word of God, to renew again Your image which was corrupted by sin and to restore to it its former beauty immutably and unchangeably, You left the height of Your greatness and walked upon earth in the flesh with the children of men, by which You became one with them. And since You took upon Yourself all that belongs to us, in Your Economy You were pleased to be born by our way of birth. You chose a mother who was pure and holy, and You sent the good tidings of salvation through the messenger of peace, the angel Gabriel. Joseph, then her husband, when the mystery of her conception was made known to him was seized with doubt and anxiety, and for the sake of justice thought to send her away secretly. Then command was given to the angel of peace and he came swiftly to the just man and made known to him in a divine revelation all that was hidden, and restored peace and confidence to his doubting mind. Therefore we give praise and say: O the divine revelation which Joseph received with joy and it took away his fear!

And we also beseech You, Christ our God, Saviour and Liberator of our race who descended to the limit of humiliation for our salvation, that You will let Your right hand rest upon Your Church and strengthen her and adorn her with truth and fearlessness and show Yourself merciful and compassionate to all that they may justly thank and worship You, Lord, and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The Wakeful One descends to Joseph because of Mary,
to reveal to him the truth about her conception.
With a tongue like live fire he makes known the true mystery:
Do not be anxious concerning the conception of the Virgin.
It is of the Holy Spirit, as prophesied by Isaiah.
A virgin shall conceive and give birth to Emmanuel, God.

Joseph the Just had doubts about the conception of the Child
whose generation is hidden from the Wakeful Ones and the angels.
How could one who is of dust comprehend Your mysteries?
In Your love do not let him down when he is put out by doubts.

Help him, make him stand in faith that his heart may rejoice,
for You are He who dwell in the heights and in the depths.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Fruit of Life descended from the heavenly heights
and entered Mary by the ear. He dwelt in the holy womb
and was fashioned in it and became a son of man.
He came forth to care for the Creation, while preserving
the seal of virginity of the Mother who bore Him.
He left it intact when He went forth, throwing
in amazement the debaters who scrutinize the Godhead.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Lord, receive our service and our prayers, and in Your
tenderness grant us our requests. Remember Your worshippers,
here in the Church and above in heaven. And when You come
in glory with the companies of the spiritual Wakeful Ones .
grant us, our Lord, to be joined with them,
that we may offer praise in their assemblies,
to You and to Your Father and to the Holy Spirit.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory.....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia....P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who sent an angel to confirm Joseph the Just,
confirm us all in that faith which leaves no place for doubt.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

By the full reality of His Incarnation
He became the crown of the members of His body.
He willed to come to birth according to the order of nature
to give birth to Adam, and by His birth to save him from slavery.

When God was about to enter Adam in the Book of Life,
decrees were issued to register for the census; two decrees
were issued, one from the heights and one from the depths.
Two kings, in two parts of the world, were to register the peoples.

The orders reached Joseph , Mary's husband,
to register his name in the city of David.
The King went to the royal city to be manifested there,
and by His birth to register men in the Book of Life.

Glory to the Father who sent His son for our salvation.
Adoration to the Son born in the flesh from the Virgin Mary.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who sent the Wakeful Ones
to sing praise to the King born in the flesh. To Him be glory.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Sunday Before the Nativity of our Lord Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

Eternal and Hidden Being who were sent into the world from the Father's heart and took flesh without change from the Holy Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit to be for us the very image of the invisible God, make us worthy, on the festival of Your birth in the flesh, to praise You with fervour and purity, and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 72 (71) O God, give Your judgement to the king....

Response

He shall descend like rain on the meadow,
like a shower watering the earth.
In His days justice shall flourish,
mountains will bring forth peace for the people.

In Your grace You dwelt in the womb of the Virgin
and through her, in Your love,
You gave joy to Adam, the head of our race.
You are blessed for ever, Lord , God of our fathers.

The companies of the heavenly beings cannot declare,
and the assemblies of earthly creatures cannot comprehend
the wonderful mystery of Your marvellous wisdom,
You are blessed for ever, God of our fathers.

At the birth of the King, the Christ,
the Wakeful Ones fly and descend to Bethlehem.
There they sing praise and cry out, Holy !Holy!
You are blessed for ever, God of our fathers.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us....P.3

Response

Light of light, Child of the Heavenly Father,
with Your rays You enlighten the world
and rejoice those who are dejected.
Come, all you peoples, bow before Him and worship Him.

Today the word of the prophet is explained,
that a star shall come forth from Jacob,
a leader will appear from Israel.
Come, all you peoples, bow before Him and worship Him.

Today is born the Child whose name is "Wonder".
Indeed God is wonderful
who manifests Himself in the form of a child.
Come, all you peoples, bow before Him and worship Him.

Christ our God is the Sun of Righteousness.
He shines forth from the Father, the Creator of the light.
He manifests Himself at Bethlehem with a body.
Come, all you peoples, bow before Him and worship Him.

Today the angels sing a new praise
to the Son who is born in a cave:
Glory to God in the highest heaven
and on earth peace and calm and good hope for humankind.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise...to the Child of Wonder who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made and sprang forth from the mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Christ, True Child of the Father, You came to a second birth from

Mary the Holy Virgin! The Ancient of Days You submitted Yourself to times and seasons, fluctuations and measures! You are clothed in light as with a mantle yet wrapped in strips of cloth beyond telling! You ride on the heavens yet You are held in arms without being reduced! Clouds and mist surround You yet You are reared on the knees of a maiden beyond understanding! The acclamations of the hosts on high are heard and make known Your Godhead. A star goes before and guides the wise men, while they carry gifts, to offer adorations and proclaim Your Kingship. The prophets dance and make their voice heard, they strike their harps and proclaim Your coming. The East rejoices and shows that 'Lord' is Your name. The earth is glad and makes known that You are her Creator, and that by Your birth she has been freed from the former malediction and is crowned with glory. Today Eve learns reverence and the Serpent is put to shame. Gabriel announces and makes the glad tidings heard. Bethlehem is exalted and Jerusalem exults. The bond of Simeon is loosed and he sings to the Child in his old arms, of whose brightness the mountains tell. And we who glory in being redeemed by Your birth in the flesh offer You our adorations while we present not passing gifts like the wise men, but the spiritual fruits of minds pure and clean from the baseness of sin.

We, therefore, beseech You that as You stayed in Bethlehem stay now and dwell in our hearts. And may our joyful songs please You, like the gifts of the wise men, and we will offer You praise and glory, and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Job had already announced and declared in his own days:
I know that my Saviour lives and that at the end of time
He will manifest Himself on earth; I witness
that this treasure will be opened to all peoples and nations.
He foretold thus that the Renewer would come into the world
when it was grown old; He would come at the end
and through the pardon of sins and the confirming of the faith
He would renew that which had grown old.

I heard David singing psalms and announcing
that the God of gods would be manifested
in the streets of Jerusalem, the Lord, in the city of David.
He would spring up like a shoot from the thirsty earth.

He would renew the seed which had grown old.
He would be the first of the inheritance.
Blessed be His name, now and in the ages to come.
His name is before the sun
and exists from eternity and will endure for ever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

O Jeremiah, take up your harp, sing and speak and make us know
the wondrous story which the Holy Spirit has revealed to you.
How will the Lord be conceived?
How will He, of His own will, be changed into a servant?
Blessed be He who looked upon Adam, old and sunk in corruption
and took his likeness to renew this image by His own.
Behold, people and angels chant and say:
Glory in heaven and joyous hope to humankind.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The prophets whose visions were explained
on the day of Your birth rejoice.
And the apostles who preached the good news upon earth
exult in joy with them.
They await the crown which Your Father has prepared for them.
And we who sing the glory of Your birth from Mary,
may we be united to them in the Paradise of light and joy.
And as Your power has been bestowed on us
and You have taken on our body,
may we never be deprived of Your gifts.

Lord, remember the dead and grant them repose,
those who were clothed in You at baptism
and received You at the altar, eating Your holy body
and drinking Your blood in the chalice of salvation.
May they take their pleasure with Abraham in the Kingdom.
And may they sing at Your right hand: Glory to You, Lord, halleluia.
Our Lord, grant rest to Your servants.

Prayer of Incense

Praise to You, Eternal Child of the Father,
who in Your love for us willed to become a child of time.

Receive this incense which we offer to You, today,
Lord God, in memory of Your birth,
and by it forgive our debts and our faults,
our Lord and our God for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Lord who by Your birth give life to Your Church,
spread Your peace in her, and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

The young maiden carries the King of kings in her pure womb.
She goes up with Joseph to Ephrata.
When the King has come to the place which He knows to be His,
He prepares to enter into His own dominion.

The time when the dove is going to bring forth
the Son of the King is approaching, the moment of the birth
of Him who forms children in the womb has come.
And as there is not a house at Bethlehem for His Mother
they take refuge in a cave dug in the rock and dwell there.

The Rich enters with the poor into this borrowed dwelling.
The weak settle with the Strong in this hollow cavern.
The Virgin Sheep brings forth the Lion Cub,
the Mighty One whom Jacob described in his blessings.

Glory to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Adoration to the Son born in the flesh from a daughter of David.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who sent the angels to sing glory
to the King who is born in the flesh. Praise to Him.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
I shall see You in truth
and I shall be satisfied when Your faith shall awake.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
He will descend like dew on the thirsty earth,
like a gentle rain on tender grass.
He will set free the poor and the oppressed.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 2:1-5 Joseph goes to Bethlehem for the census with Mary who was with child.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were born of the Father in an ineffable manner and were incarnate of the Virgin Mary without being limited, reveal Yourself to the world as the Son of God full of grace and truth, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who created all things by Your word and yet willed to dwell in the womb of a daughter of man to take flesh from her and appear as a son of man, make Your presence felt in the Churches and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who came to set the downtrodden free, prompt our leaders and rulers to dedicate themselves to the service of the millions of India. Strengthen them in their task of putting an end to crying inequalities by providing dignity of life and true freedom to all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy Father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the

Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

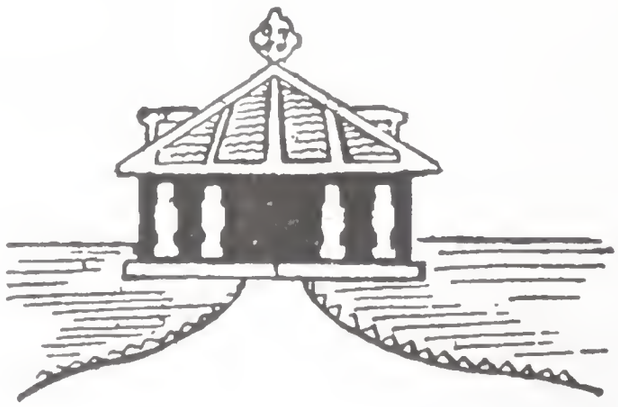
Concluding Prayer

Lord, grant us to honour Your birth for our salvation with a true faith, free from all doubt, that we may worship and praise Your loving kindness towards us, Christ our true God, we beseech You and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION



Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy!Lord,..... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.....P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and people on earth cry out: Holy! Holy! to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

On this night of deep rest let us watch with the shepherds,
receive the Good News from the angels and sing with the Wakeful Ones.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Beloved, with the Wakeful Ones let us sing glory to God on High.
And on earth may His peace reign with good hope for humankind.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to the one in three and the three are one,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him be praise, honour and adoration for ever.
And on us His love and compassion.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 33(32) Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just...

Response

Let us shout for joy before God,
and sing to Him a new song.
By His word He makes all things new,
and fills the earth with His love.

Shower, O heavens, from above.
Let the skies drop down the Righteous One.
Let the earth open, that salvation may sprout forth.
Come, Emmanuel, come and make Your dwelling with us.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Child of Wonder who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made, and sprang forth from the mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil.....

Christ, True Child from the Father who came to a second birth from Mary the Holy Virgin! Ancient of days, who submitted Yourself to times and seasons, fluctuations and measures! Son of the Godhead for whose kingly throne a seat of crystal is not sufficient, yet the womb of a virgin received You, according to the blessed pleasure of Your own will! Mighty One by whose strength the chariot of four faces is moved around, and You were encompassed in the narrow way of birth as a man! You who are arrayed in light were wrapped in strips of cloth beyond telling. You who ride the heavens were held in arms. Clouds and darkness surround You, and You are reared on the knees of a maiden beyond understanding. You who provide for worlds and peoples suck milk from a virgin. Angels surround You, and You are looked after in the household of Joseph. The acclamations of the heavenly hosts are heard. A star which goes before You makes known Your Godhead and guides the wise men who carry gifts to offer worship and proclaim Your Kingship. Today the Serpent is crushed and his bitter poison is turned into sweetness. Today the harsh sentence which was written against us is torn up and blotted out by the writing of a human birth. Today the heavens rejoice and the earth exults with all that is in it, and Paradise is glad because the way to it is cleared.

We, therefore, who glory because we have been saved by Your holy birth in the flesh offer You adoration, while we bring You not passing gifts like the wise men but the spiritual fruits of a sincere mind free from the baseness of sin. And we beseech You that as You stayed in Bethlehem, You will stay and dwell in our hearts; our joyful songs will please You like the gifts of the wise men, and we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Glory to You for Your Godhead.
Thanksgiving for Your birth.
You became an infant in the womb and grew up as a child.
You conquered death and vanquished Satan,
and restored Adam and his children to Paradise.

Isaiah the prophet announced about Emmanuel,
He will be born of a daughter of David,
God mighty for evermore, the Prince of Peace,
and deliver the creation by His birth.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to the Strong One who lowered His mercy, from on high,
and descended and became an infant of His own will.
He came forth from Mary and rejoiced the heavenly companies
by making Adam and his children to return to them.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed is Your birth and blessed is the womb that bore You,
Son of God who willed to become a son of man.
By You the Church and her children are saved from evil.
Blessed fruit, blessed is He who gave You to us.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.....P.8

Psalm 34(33) I will bless the Lord at all times...

Response

Let us bless the Lord at all times.
Let His praise be always on our lips.
Taste and see that the Lord is good
and be happy to seek refuge in Him.

Away with malice and deceit!
Like new-born infants we must crave for pure spiritual milk,
so that we may grow up and be saved.
Surely we must taste that the Lord is good.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Child of Wonder who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made, and sprang forth from the mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

When we consider the Wondrous Mysteries of Your Economy, O Christ our Lord and God, and first Your eternal birth from the Father and Your second and saving birth from Mary, we give thanks for Your power beyond measure and the abundance of Your compassion and mercy. While Your eternal birth was hidden and concealed from the Wakeful Ones, by Your will and that of Your Father and of Your Holy Spirit You descended to the second birth in Your love, that You might snatch us from our servitude to our captor. And therefore You sent Your holy prophets like messengers of peace. One of them figured You in a lamb which was slain at sunset for our salvation.... Another prophesied: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear Emmanuel. One proclaimed...that a star should rise from Jacob and should rule over Israel. Finally You sent the head of the angels to the pure Virgin, full of holiness, and instructed him to announce a message of joy: The Lord is with you, blessed among women.... And while You rejoiced like an infant in the virgin womb, You were forming infants in the wombs of their mothers by Your divine commands. While You lay in the poor manger like one without strength, You held all creatures in being by Your divine power. And while You were honoured by the wise men with gifts like a king, You caused the angel to appear, who announced to the shepherds: Today a Saviour is born to you in the city of David who is Christ the Lord.

Therefore we beseech You, O Lord, who fulfilled all these things indeed for our salvation, grant us that we may be in our way of life like the children whom You praised in Your Holy Gospel; that we may have understanding of the mystery of Your exalted childhood, that we may learn from it humility and true love for You and for one another, and right obedience to those who are set over us. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The angel descended from on high
and announced to the shepherds: In the city of David,
the Lord of the heights and the depths has appeared.
Go and worship and call on His name.
Blessed is He who came for our salvation.

The shepherds came and saw the child lying in the manger.
The companies of the spiritual ones stood before Him,
and they chanted: Blessed is He who has come and is to come.
Glory to Him who has sent Him.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The wise men coming from Persia entered and found the Child.
They bowed to the ground and adored Him.
They sang praise to Him who sent the Child.
They opened their treasures and offered gold, incense and myrrh.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Joseph worshipped and praised the Uniquely Beloved Son of God
who came from His Father of His own will
and dwelt in Mary without marriage
and was born in Bethlehem to save Adam and his children.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Blessed is He who sent His peace
to the blessed one through the angel.

May He make peace to dwell in His Churches
and heal in them the deep wound of disunity.

A great wonder, indeed: the manger contains the Creator
and bears all the power of the Strong One,
the Lion-cub that reclined in it.

The Flame holds itself within the manger.
He sucks milk from His Mother.
To Him all honour and glory and adoration as to the Lord.

Today Mary is the heaven that contains God,
for in her descended and dwelt
the high and exalted Divinity.

Glory to the Exalted One who humbled Himself
to raise us from our fall.
Praise to Him and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit.
And on us His true love.

May He make peace to dwell in His Churches
and heal in them the deep wound of disunity.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ ... P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P..6

MEDITATION

First Sunday
After the Nativity of our Lord
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God, that with the Wakeful Ones on high we may sing to You and offer pure praises with songs of the Holy Spirit. With the shepherds may we worship You with a true worship. With the wise men may we be enlightened by You. And we will give You glory on this day of Your illustrious birth from the Holy Virgin, our Lord and our God for ever. Amen.

Psalm 72(71) O God, give Your judgement to the king...

Response

In His days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon is no more.
He shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
May hills and mountains afford Your people
peace and prosperity in righteousness.

Lover of Humankind, Lord full of mercy and compassion,
You brought to nothing the Rebel who, in the beginning,
reduced us to slavery by delivering us
to the powers which drove us into the utter darkness.
You who enrich all things lowered Yourself and put on
our feeble and wretched body, the body of our fall,
adorn it now with the garment of Divinity.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord , hear us....P.3

Response

Who would not be amazed and sing praises,
seeing kings from Persia bringing their gifts,
and they enter and worship with a joyful heart
the baby born in a cave.
O God, be gracious to the whole creation!

Glory to You, our Lord, who for our sake
were pleased to become a babe from Mary,
to deliver the race of Adam from deceit,
and to save us from our enslavement to sin.
O God, be gracious to the whole creation!

Persian wise men of Assyria
carry and bring offerings and choice gifts.
They enter and worship in the cave
Him whom the Fiery Ones worship in heaven,
and to whom on earth human beings offer praises.
O God, be gracious to the whole creation!

The wise men from Persia offer three presents,
symbols of the Great King who is born.
Myrrh and gold and incense
show that He is King and Lord
come to die for our salvation.
O God, be gracious to the whole creation!

We offer praise to the Father
and adoration to the Son,
and at all times we give thanks to the Holy Spirit,
one God who is beyond all comprehension,
adored and glorified by the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Great One who gave orders to the small womb and it

was found big enough for Him, to the Mighty One who strengthened the feeble arms and they carried Him as it pleased His love. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Praise to You, God the Word, who do not grow as we do, Great One who became small by Your incarnation, while the fulness of Your greatness was not diminished. You who are the Most High descended from heaven without leaving Your majesty. You who fashion infants in the womb were Yourself in the place of infants...You who are rich by nature were found by Your will among the poor. You who feed the hungry had need to suck the milk of Mary Your Mother. O what a great wonder has taken place in the world... God is born like an infant and the Mother who bore Him has kept her virginity! The Saviour is born at Bethlehem and He sends a star to Persia to announce His birth. He who carries the world in His power is clothed in strips of cloth like an infant; He is born without the intervention of man. He is a son without a father. Heavenly beings come down to announce the wonder and the shepherds run to see the marvel. The wise men worship Him and offer their gifts with trembling.

Therefore , Christ our God who work all these wonders and marvels for us, we offer words of praise and thanksgiving to Your Lordship and we ask You to hear those who call upon You. Strengthen them to do always the will of the Father, like You. Pardon their faults and have compassion on those who went to rest in Your hope. Make them to enter into the heavenly dwellings and on the day of Your manifestation make us also worthy like them of the joys of eternal life. And we will thank You and worship You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

All the generations who had some knowledge of this
inestimable treasure, hold our generation blessed;
for they had hoped to see it, but could reach it
only in their dreams, while we enjoy it in reality.
For them it remained a sealed treasure.
They had been wondering to whom it would be opened.
They had longed for it, the just, the prophets and kings,
and all the good people who had some knowledge of it.

Today He dwells in a cave, for whom the heavens are too narrow.
He is wrapped up in strips of cloth who is clothed in splendour.
He is cradled on the knees
whose glory makes the Winged Creatures tremble.
He who provides nourishment for all creatures sucks a little milk.
Glory to His humility who willed to lower Himself to our level
and because He was man, He embraced all that belongs to man.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

At the birth of Christ the King the Wakeful Ones in heaven
and the companies of fire and spirit are stirred and descend
to Bethlehem with the Good News for the shepherds:
Today is born the Saviour in the city of David.
He is the Lord our God, sing glory to God in the highest heaven,
and below, on earth, good hope to mortals, the children of men.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

As John has written, in the beginning was God the Word,
who descended and rested in the womb of a virgin,
as He willed to clothe Himself in a body.
He manifested Himself in the creation,
and gave light to the four quarters of the earth
which from of old were plunged in darkness.
When the evil spirit learnt that the Son of God was born
he lamented and wept, saying:
Woe is me, from henceforth the power of my rule is abolished.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Praise to You, Christ, Incense of Reconciliation
whose fragrance has spread all over the world,

and the East was moved to honour You with spices.
Thanksgiving to You, Fair Plant,
which came forth and grew up from the thirsty earth of Mary.
The dead breathed it and they came back to life.

Bless, Lord, this incense which we offer to You,
that when the sweet scent of Your grace breathes upon us,
we may thank and worship You
and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit,
now and always and for ever.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia, let us say, halleluia,
as the shepherds said, halleluia, at Bethlehem.
The Word of God became flesh.

Sing, sing, sing, let us sing, halleluia,
as the shepherds sang, halleluia, at Bethlehem.
Our Saviour is born.

You who are wise, come and see
the newborn Child all wrapped up.
Consider that all the creation hangs upon His command.
Be filled with wonder at seeing Him lying in the manger
at Bethlehem, He who with His Father rules heaven and earth.

Behold, He who sits on the throne of the heavens,
the Virgin carried in her womb.
He before whom the angels prostrate and worship in heaven
is cradled in the arms of Mary and in Joseph's lap.

He before whom the Fiery Ones while flying chant their hallowings
is carried by people and praised by their tongues.
The heavens are too small to contain Him, He descends on earth,
and the womb of Mary is big enough to enclose Him.

We sing praise in hymns of fire at Your birth, O our Saviour.
Children of Adam, offer thanksgiving with all your heart.
Let heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land cry "Glory",
on the day of Your birth which gladdens us. To You be praise.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Lord said to me: You are My Son.
Today I have begotten You.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Ask and I shall give You the nations for heritage.
I shall put the ends of the earth in Your possessions.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 1:9-14 The Incarnation of the Word of God.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who by Your birth earned for us the ability to become children of God, His true offspring, not born of the fleshly desire of man but divinely regenerated, make the glory of the Uniquely Beloved Son shine upon this assembly of children of God, that glory radiating grace and truth, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who likened Your Kingdom to a field sown with good seeds, seeds of the Word, prompt us to go in search of them in the spiritual patrimony of our people, the people of the East, thereby enriching the life of Your Churches through the enlightenment we receive from them, as You received the presents from the wise men from the East, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who came to bring the Good News to the poor, prompt our leaders and rulers to dedicate themselves to the service of the millions of India, strengthen them in their task of putting an end to inequalities by providing dignity of life and true freedom to all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Christ our God, that we may be worthy to celebrate this festival of Your birth in the flesh from the Virgin with joy, and worship You with the shepherds, and offer You gifts with the wise men, and with the angels cry and say: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace and good hope for all people. And we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord,..... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.....P.7

Response

Why do you love sleep more than praise, my soul?
How long will you be engrossed in pleasures that do not profit?
Awake now and rise and sing praise!
Lord of all, to You the praise.

The Word of the heavenly Father
dwelt in the womb of the Daughter of David
and came forth from her, leaving the seal of virginity intact.
Glory to Him who came and visited us. Lord of all, to You the praise.

This night of joy, let us not sleep like the slothful.
The shepherds kept vigil at Bethlehem
and were found worthy of the vision of the Wakeful Ones
who descended and sang praise. Lord of all to You the praise.

Heaven and earth and all that is in them give glory
to the Son of the King who rejoices the Church by His birth,
and delivers the race of Adam from enslavement to sin.
Lord of all, to You the praise.

We offer praise to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Thanksgiving to the Son who came from Him and saved us by His Cross.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy. One true God.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 45 (44) My heart overflows with noble words...

Response

To the King I must speak the song I have made:
You are the fairest of the children of men
and graciousness is poured upon your lips
because God has blessed you for evermore.

Today let the heavens rejoice and the sea exult
and all the generations of the earth,
on account of Emmanuel who came from us
and has mingled with us, as Isaiah had prophesied.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.. to the Holy One, who in the Holy of Holies of His Being is hallowed with His Father and His Holy Spirit, and who hallowed the womb of the Virgin and descended and dwelt in her and was born from her. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Who is able to praise Your saving and life-giving incarnation, Christ our God? When You saw the race of us men given over to corruption, You who are the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father entered into the womb of the Holy Virgin, and fulfilled the measure of nine months, and were born of her in the flesh from her by birth, as perfect God and perfect man in two natures and one person. You filled the whole creation with joy on the glorious day of Your birth and made the earth again a heaven and joined together the angels and people on earth. The manger in which You were laid was surrounded by angels, who made a joyful sound and said: Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace and tranquillity and good hope to the people on earth. Mary, the Blessed Mother, offered praise and worship with lovely songs to You. Joseph the Just who had brought her from Nazareth for Your birth and gave honour to her as to one who has given birth to God, was counted worthy to be

called father of Your coming in the flesh, although it was without marriage and partnership.

Therefore we also Your sinful servants beseech Your graciousness that You will not enter into judgement with us because by Your incarnation You rescued us from the tyranny of the Enemy. Make us worthy of the heavenly glory which is kept for those who walk in Your footsteps that we may offer perpetual praise to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

This night while the shepherds were keeping vigil,
the angels descended to them and said:
Peace be with you, O poor men!
Peace on earth and glory in heaven!
God, the Son of God, is born of Mary.
Behold, the whole creation sings praise to Him,
halleluia, who descended to save them.

Joseph went and saw a wonder. Mary said to him:
Wise men have come from Persia, they are standing at the door.
Receive them, for they are tired by the journey.
Ask them what they want.
We seek the King of kings born in Bethlehem, they said.
Behold, we have come from Persia to offer Him our adorations,
halleluia, for He is the Son of God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Blessed Child appeared today from Ephrata.
The brightness of His light enlightens the whole creation.
Untruth seeing Him was confounded and cast down.
The Church saw Him and she bowed down and worshipped Him,
halleluia, halleluia, on the day of His birth.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

A bright star was seen by the wise men in Persia
which led them to His Majesty, the King of the worlds.
They carried gifts and brought them, rejoicing.

And when they arrived at the cave at Bethlehem,
opening their treasures they offered them, full of joy:
gold, myrrh and incense to the Son of the Virgin,
halleluia, and they bowed down and worshipped Him.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....p.8

Psalm 48 (47) The Lord is great and worthy to be praised...

Response

Jerusalem, true pole of the earth,
the great king's city!
God in the midst of its citadel,
has shown Himself its stronghold.

The wise men carry their offerings
and the shepherds come with their gifts.
The Churches and their children offer thanksgiving to You
who rejoice them on the day of Your birth.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.. to Him who is rich by nature, and yet was wrapped up in strips of cloth. In His compassion He lay in a simple manger, in a little cave, like a poor man. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Lord Christ, Only-begotten Son, Word of the Father, Brightness of His Glory and Image of His Being, You are the Fountain-head of all good things. Your eternal birth is beyond all telling and surpasses the understanding of all creatures, when You freely consented to descend so far to us and inclined the heavens which are full of Your splendour. You descended and became a child on earth for the sake of us children of earth, while You remained God after this birth in time, in a manner which is above all speech and thought and hearing.

We therefore beseech You, Child without beginning who were born for us and were given to us as Son and Saviour, that You may not turn Your festival into mourning because of the multitude of our sins. Show to us the joy of Your salvation and gladden us by the brightness of Your glory, like the innocent shepherds at the time of Your birth. Unite us with them that we may be gathered in Your name with the companies of the heavenly ones which celebrated You at that time. Strengthen us that with them we may cry and say: Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace and good hope for the children of men. Again make us fit to be a resting place that is a dwelling for You, as Bethlehem Ephrata was for You and Your parents Joseph and Mary. Feed us with Yourself as with a life-giving bread and sustain our hearts by the food of Your word... May we rejoice and take our pleasure in You and from Your strips of cloth be clothed in a garment of glory and be arrayed in angelic strength as by the star... While You deliver us here from the Evil One full of deceit who like the old Herod seeks to destroy our souls. Make us return by another way of righteousness, and through Your divine revelation reach to that former place, the Church of the Firstborn, above this world, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

On the day of Your birth, Christ our King,
the Churches rejoice with their children
and offer praise to the Hidden Father
who in His love sent You to us
to deliver us from the tyranny of death and sin.

Truly it was a great wonder that He who is God
entered by the ear and dwelt in Mary
and was clothed with flesh from her.
Truly it was a great wonder that He was brought forth
and did not break the seal of virginity.
He sucks milk for His food and is wrapped in strips of cloth.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The day of Your birth is like that of a great king
who came to rule over the earth and none was aware of it.

Those who hated Him tried to kill Him without pity,
and those who were waiting for His coming He clothes with glory.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Mary was a mother-ewe of the house of David
who gave birth to the Lamb.
The shepherds saw Him and came to pay homage to Him.
The wise men from Persia came to honour Him,
and they offered Him their gifts
and bowed down to Him and worshipped Him.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory.....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia....P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us!

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia. Let us say, halleluia,
as the shepherds said, halleluia, at Bethlehem.
The Word became flesh.

Sing, sing, sing, let us sing, halleluia,
as the shepherds sang, halleluia, at Bethlehem.
Our Saviour is born.

Crowns of glory are woven for the Lord of glory from two sides.
One is presented from the heights, the other from the low regions.
The angels hasten to announce to the shepherds: Behold,
the Lord Christ is made manifest to you, in the city of David.

Oh what a wonder, full of awe, tremendous!
The Gracious One for whom heaven is small asks for a lodge.
The Fiery Ones hide themselves from Him,
and Joseph worships Him, what a wonder!
The heavenly orders are in greatest attention before Him
and the earthly ones live quietly with Him. Oh the great wonder!

The shepherds and their flocks rejoice at the announcement.
They accept, they believe and sing praise and bring gifts.
Wakeful Ones and people on earth crowd around the Child.
Angels join with the shepherds to give Him glory.

Glory to the Father who sent His Word and He became flesh.
Adoration to the Son, infinite yet contained in the manger.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who prompted the Wakeful Ones
to sing glory, and they cried out and said:
Glory in the highest heaven and peace in the low-lying regions.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels...P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P..6

MEDITATION

Second Sunday
After the Nativity of our Lord[6]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

Eternal and Hidden Being who from the Father's heart were sent into the world and took flesh from the Holy Virgin Mary, without change, on the day of Your birth in the flesh, make us worthy to praise You gloriously and with sincerity, You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 42(41) Like the deer that yearns...

Response

As the deer longs for a stream of cool water
so we long for You, O God.
We thirst for You, the living God...
Our hope is in You, we praise You, our Saviour and our God.

Man's heart was longing for the Lord his God.
The Lord set aside the heavens and descended to us.
He became man and we have seen His face, the face of God,
in His Eternal Son, the Child Jesus, Son of the Virgin.

You who in Your love dwelt in the womb of the Virgin
and in Your compassion renewed the race of Adam, our head,
You are blessed for ever,
Lord, God of our fathers, Lord of the whole creation.

The companies of those in heaven cannot describe
the wondrous mystery of Your marvellous wisdom.
The assemblies of those on earth cannot comprehend it,
Lord, God of our fathers, Lord of the whole creation.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us.....P.3

Response

Blessed is the Child of Wonder
who made Himself to be seen as an infant
and mingled with us in the form of man,
when He came to save Adam.

Who would cease to praise the Son,
the Christ who made Himself to be seen by us,
whom in their generation and in their age
the just had so much desired to see?

In the beginning was the Word.
Through Him all creatures were made.
The Word became flesh and the Father cried out to Him:
You are my Son, today I have begotten You.

Enlightened by the Spirit Abraham knew
that the day of Your birth was far off.
He besought You and saw it and rejoiced in it,
and he sang the praise of Your Majesty.

Praise to You who are one in three and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit , one true God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.. to the Child of Wonder who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made, and sprang forth from the mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Glory to You, Eternal Child, Only-begotten of the Father, who are hidden without beginning in the cave of His heart and are one with the Holy Spirit while by You all things were created... You, Hidden Child, Abraham typified beforehand by the ram in the thicket which redeemed Isaac. Job the just spoke of You when He said: I know that my

Redeemer lives, and that at the end He will appear on earth. And Moses the Prophet saw You on the mountain, in the fire which blazed in the bush but it was not burnt up, for You are the divine fire which rested in the womb of the Holy Virgin and she was not harmed. Of You David sang when he said: You are my son, today I have begotten you. You, Holy Child, Isaiah the prophet saw when he cried out and said: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son. And he called You, Child of Wonder, in that You who are God became man without change. Of You Jeremiah prophesied when he said: Behold, the days shall come, says the Lord, and I will raise up to David the shoot of Righteousness. You Daniel saw and called You the stone which was hewn without human hands. You, true child, Gabriel announced to the Holy Virgin when he said: Peace be with you, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, from you shall come forth the Saviour of the whole creation. You the angels praised in the cave at Bethlehem with voices of jubilation: Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace and good hope for the children of men because in the city of David there is born the Saviour who is the Lord, the Christ. The shepherds saw You and they gave praise with thanksgiving for Your revelation and they paid honour to Your birth with their gifts. The star that led the wise men proclaimed You to the ends of the earth and they came to worship You and offered to You the good things of their land. You, Simeon the old man besought when he said: Let me depart, for my eyes have seen Your compassion. And You let him depart from this life by Your command. Today all those things which were signified by the law and of which the prophets spoke have come to be manifested.

Therefore we, poor sinners, like John in the womb worship, and like David before the ark we keep festival and we beg and beseech You, Christ our God, that You will grant us that we may praise You with the just and honour You with the righteous and exalt You with the apostles and rejoice in You with the martyrs and sing to You with the heavenly hosts on high. And we will offer You praise and thanksgiving, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Behold, the time of my childbearing approaches, said Mary,
Come, Joseph, let us go to the cave of Bethlehem.
I have no cradle or house or bed,
I am deprived of everything on earth.

I will wrap in strips of cloth Him who is before all generations.
I will place in a manger Him who willed this in His love.
Halleluia, glory to His humility.

On this day of Your birth, O Son of God,
the heaven and the earth and all creatures rejoice.
The Wakeful Ones chant glory in the highest heaven,
and the angels sing: Peace on earth.
Shepherds and wise men with their gifts,
nations, peoples and tribes sing praise to You.
Halleluia, halleluia.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Heaven and earth and all that they contain
rejoice at Your birth, O Son of God, and sing Your praise.
The prophets rejoice at the fulfilment of their symbols.
The apostles exult who were Your preachers.
The peoples and the nations rejoice whom You delivered
from the enslavement to sin to count them among Your people,
halleluia, and they also chant Your praise.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

A bright star appears to the wise men in Persia
and guides them to honour the King of the worlds.
They load themselves with presents and set out full of joy.
They go and arrive at the cave of Bethlehem.
They open what they have brought and offer it with great joy
to the Son of the Virgin, halleluia, halleluia,
gold, incense and myrrh.

Lord, make memory of the dead and grant them repose,
who were clothed with You in baptism
and received You at the altar. They ate Your holy body
and drank Your blood, the chalice of salvation.
May they take their delight in the Kingdom with Abraham
and cry out to You at Your right hand: Glory to You, Lord.
Halleluia, our Lord, grant rest to Your servants.

Prayer of Incense

Blessed Fruit, Holy Medicinal Herb of sweet scent,
who sprang up without sowing and without watering
from a thirsty earth, Mary the Virgin,
for the sake of all generations You were placed in a cave
at Bethlehem Ephrata, in a manger for animals,
and by Your spiritual scent You gave pleasure
to those who were far and those who were near,
in the four quarters of the earth.

Place Yourself now, Lord, in the mystical Bethlehem of our minds,
and as You permeate with the sweet scent of Your love
all the desires of our hearts, be Yourself delighted
with the spiritual fragrance of the temples of our hearts,
that we may praise You with joy and exultation and keep
Your festival cheerfully, and celebrate You with great dignity,
and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit,
now and always and for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who by Your birth deliver Your Church from untruth
give her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

All the companies of heaven are astonished to behold Him.
Mary carries Him and fondles Him like a little child.
All creatures ask of Him their food
but like a newborn baby He asks milk from Mary.

Infants rejoice because He who forms infants in the womb
is become their companion.
With the boys He runs in the streets like all other children of Adam.
Young men are glad to praise the Lord of time
who chose to become a young man, one of them.

All creatures in heaven and on earth
give glory to Your Divinity which surpasses all,
Trinity one in essence, one in being.
To the three who are one and the one in three, to Him be praise.

Glory to the Father who alone knows His mystery.
Adoration to the Son who is equal in glory to His Father.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who is sublime by nature
and cannot be inquired into.
Trinity which surpasses all, praise to You.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The kings of Arabia and Sheba
bring You their gifts.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Word has become flesh,
and all flesh shall know that He is the Saviour.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 3:1-9 John's mission in the Jordan region.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who through the call of the wise men signified the vocation of the nations to obtain Your salvation, may Your birth be to them a sun visiting from on high, the light that shines on all people, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who have given us the joy to be children of the Church, that Church of which the wise men were the firstfruits from among the nations, give us the courage and zeal through the grace of Your Holy Spirit always to witness to the truth of Your teachings, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who likened Your Kingdom to a field sown with good seeds-- seeds of the Word--prompt us to go in search of them in the spiritual patrimony of our people, the people of the East, thereby enriching the life of Your Churches through the enlightenment we receive from them, as You received the presents from the wise men from the East, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop,N...our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Christ our God, make us always find joy in offering worship in spirit and in truth; and grant us to praise You like the shepherds, to offer You gifts like the wise men and with the angels to sing: Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace, calm and good hope for all people. And we will again say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy!Lord,..... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.....P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy !Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and people on earth cry out: Holy! Holy ! to You.
Holy !Holy !Holy are You , O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The heavenly spirits never cease to praise You.
Arouse us, earthly ones, to sing praise with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Beloved, with the Wakeful Ones let us sing: Glory to God on high,
and on earth His peace and good hope for all people.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to the one in three, and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him all praise. And on us His graciousness.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 86 (85) Turn Your ear, O Lord, and give answer....

Response

Give joy to Your servants, O Lord,
for to You we lift up our hearts.
O God, You are good and forgiving,
full of love to all who call on Your name.

O God, born of the virgin
without human seed,
O Word from on high become flesh,
we have come into Your presence, be gracious to us.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.... to the Child of Wonder who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made, and sprang forth from the mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Christ, true child of the Father, You came to a second birth from Mary the Holy Virgin! Ancient of Days, You submitted Yourself to times and seasons, to fluctuations and measures! You are clothed in light as with a mantle, yet wrapped in strips of cloth beyond telling. You ride on the heavens yet You are held in arms without being reduced. Clouds and mist surround You yet You are reared on the knees of a maiden beyond understanding. The acclamations of the hosts on high are heard and make known Your Godhead. A star goes before and guides the wise men, while they carry gifts, offer adorations and announce Your Kingdom. The prophets dance and make their voices heard, they strike their harps and proclaim Your coming. The East rejoices and shows that "Lord" is Your name. The earth is glad and makes known that You are her Creator, and that by Your birth she has been freed from the former malediction and is crowned with glory. Today Eve learns reverence, and the Serpent is put to shame. Gabriel announces and makes the glad tidings heard. Bethlehem is exalted and Jerusalem exults. The bond of Simeon is loosened and he sings to the Child in his old arms, of whose brightness the mountains tell. And we who glory in being redeemed by Your birth in the flesh offer You our adorations, while we present not

passing gifts like the wise men, but the spiritual fruits of minds pure and clean from the baseness of sin.

We therefore beseech You, that as You stayed in Bethlehem, You will now stay and dwell in our hearts. And may our joyful songs please You like the gifts of the wise men, and we will offer You praise and glory, and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Today the order of the prophets rejoice
because by His birth Christ has fulfilled their symbols.
Today the assemblies of angels and of earthly ones filled with wonder
offer praise to Christ, at Bethlehem, halleluia, halleluia.
For today by His birth He has reconciled their estrangement.

On the day of His birth, the newborn Infant of the Father
hidden from all, is seen by the spirits.
Your birth gives life and peace to the Creation, O Jesus.
In Your love, give peace to Your Churches
that they may sing Your love, O Jesus full of love.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Creation exults for the Saviour has appeared.
Mary full of joy carries her Creator.
Christ who by Your birth rejoice all creatures,
give us joy at Your bridal feast,
on the day when You will come, halleluia, halleluia,
and we will thank You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory to the Father who sent His Uniquely Beloved Son
who by His birth delivered the Creation.
Glory in the highest heaven and peace on earth
and good hope for the Creation by the birth of the Only Son.
Halleluia, halleluia, blessed is the Father
who sent Him for the salvation of the world.

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.....P.8

Psalm 92(91) It is good to give thanks to the Lord...

Response

O Lord, it is good to give thanks to You,
to make music to Your name, O Most High,
to proclaim Your love in the morning
and Your truth in the watches of the night.

Today the angels rejoice over Your birth full of wonder.
The cave exults, the manger is thrilled.
The wise men are gladdened,
as the star of light shows them who is the Saviour.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Child of Wonder who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made, and sprang forth from the mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

When we consider the wondrous mysteries of Your Dispensation, O Christ our Lord and our God, and first Your eternal birth from the Father and Your second and saving birth from Mary, we give thanks for Your power beyond measure and for the abundance of Your compassion and tenderness. While Your eternal birth was hidden and concealed from the Wakeful Ones, by Your will and that of Your Father and that of Your Holy Spirit, in Your mercy, You descended to a second birth that You might snatch us from our servitude to our captor. And therefore You sent Your holy prophets like messengers of peace. While one of them figured You in the lamb which was slain at sunset for our salvation, another prophesied, Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear Emmanuel. One proclaimed that a star should rise from Jacob and should rule over Israel. Then You sent the head of the angels to the Pure Virgin full of holiness, and instructed him to announce a message of joy: The Lord is with you, blessed among women. And while You were an infant in the Virgin's womb, You were forming infants in the womb of their mothers by Your

divine command. While You were lying in the poor manger like one without strength, You held all creatures in existence by Your divine power.

Therefore we beseech You, Lord, who fulfilled all these things in deed for our salvation, grant us that we may be in our way of life like the children whom You praised in Your holy Gospel. Give us understanding of the mystery of Your exalted childhood, that from it we may learn humility and true love for You and for one another, and right obedience to those who are set over us. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Wheels of fire carry His chariot.
Fiery beings hallow His majesty.
And behold, the womb of Mary contains Him.
As He willed to become man, He comes to birth.

In His love for humankind the Father sent Gabriel
who descended and brought hope to the mortal ones.
Peace be with you, Mary, said the angel as he greeted her,
and drawing near respectfully he delivered his message:
From you shall come forth the Saviour, the Son of the Most High.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

This is a great day of rejoicing.
Today the whole creation exults with joy.
Heaven and earth and all the ends of the earth,
offer praise to the Son on the day of His birth.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Behold, in the four quarters the Churches exult.
In all parts the monasteries rejoice exceedingly,
on the day of the birth of the Son
who gives us His body, the pledge of eternal life.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory.... P. 8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord.... P. 9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia.... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens ..... P. 13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
Son who redeem us by Your birth.

Christ who save us by Your birth,
pardon us and our departed.

God descends in His goodness
and dwells in the womb of the Virgin.
The earth quakes at His gesture and the mountains tremble with fear.
The weak womb of a daughter of man bears His power, as He wills it.

He who is the Saviour of the creation,
the King, is laid in a poor manger.
He who provides rain for the whole creation
sucks milk like an infant at the breast of His Mother.

He who raises the mountains takes shelter in a cave.
Instead of a royal attire He is wrapped in strips of cloth.
Instead of sitting on the throne of His glory
He is cradled on the knees of Mary.

Glory to Him who in His greatness
dwells in a womb of flesh,
and when He comes forth from it
the seal of virginity remains unbroken.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P. 15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ.... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

First Sunday
After the Epiphany of our Lord[7]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P. 3

Doxology Glory be to the Father..... P. 1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord our God, to celebrate this holy festival of lights, Your Baptism and Divine Epiphany, in purity and holiness, and with divine praises, while You bestow on us to become children of the new creation, to the honour and glory of Your adorable and blessed name, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 29 (28) O give the Lord you sons of God....

Response

The voice of the Lord resounds over the waters....
The voice of the Lord is full of power,
the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

You who manifested the wondrous light of Your truth
to Your people who believed in You and accepted Your yoke,
You are blessed for ever, Lord, God of all creatures.

You who in ancient times created our nature in Your image
and again, in Your love, completely renewed it by Your baptism,
You are blessed for ever, Lord, God of all creatures.

Glory to the Father and thanksgiving to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit honour and adoration, one true God.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us.... P. 3

Response

People of the wedding feast, young and old,
come and offer praise to Christ
who has come to deliver us from our enslavement to sin.

Come penitents and obtain pardon for your sins.
His door is open to all who ask,
and He will not refuse what you ask of Him.

Penitents, hasten to come before God
with tears like the sinful woman,
and obtain from Him the pardon of all your sins.

Penitents, bathe with your tears the door of pardon,
Jesus is there, who lent Himself
to be loved by a harlot.

Jesus is today and tomorrow,
yesterday and from age to age.
His rule is eternal. His Kingdom has no end.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the One Living and Eternal Godhead worshipped in three blissful persons and praise in one sole unity and one sublime sovereignty, the One Exalted Being who withdraws from those who search Him out, and magnifies those who revere Him, who in His great compassion was manifested in the river Jordan and drew sinners from the abyss of sin, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God, to whom belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

God the Word, Most High, born of the Father without beginning, without passions and ineffably, Your name is like oil poured out. In Your unfathomable love for humankind, with Your precious blood, You redeemed Your people, who, by the free choice of their will were enslaved in the service of the Adversary; and by the Economy of Your holy and life-giving passion You broke down the wall of enmity and thereby

reconciled those on earth and those in heaven, and trod for us the way which leads to heaven.

Now, Lord, look upon us with kindness. Grant us and send us in abundance the gifts of Your Holy Spirit. Make us worthy to praise You with minds that are watchful, pure, strong and free from all attraction to sin, that we may stand before You in reverence and awe without fail to our last breath, arrayed in the royal robe of baptism woven by divine grace, free from all stain of lust and anger. Give, Lord, to each of us a heart which knows You in truth, a mind which serves You in purity, lips which sing to You in holiness and a tongue which confesses You at all times with faith. Deliver us from the oppression of the Enemy and the destructive passions of the flesh, that we may live before You in this world in purity, and stand before the throne of Your majesty without condemnation. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn [8]

John mixes the waters of baptism and Christ sanctifies them.
As He descends in the river and is baptized there,
the heights and the depths pay honour to Him.
When He comes up out of the water,
sun and moon bow before Him and the clouds praise Him
who by the mystery of baptism makes us His brothers,
halleluia,and children of His Father.

The Church hears John proclaim:
After me comes the Bridegroom, the Saviour of the world.
He is clothed in a wondrous vesture
and invites His children to His marriage, to rejoice with Him.
From afar John sees Him and cries out and says:
Behold the Lamb of God who gives life to the world.
Halleluia, O Lord, how glorious is Your manifestation!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Church approaches and worships the Beloved Son
and addresses a new praise to Him by the waters of baptism:
I worship You, Lord, who made me worthy to see Your face.
I offer praise to the Father who sent You.

From the water You have drawn for me a vesture of fire and spirit,
You have clothed me in garments of glory, O Lord.
Blessed is Your manifestation, halleluia,
and how glorious is He who sent You.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Now is the time for the Bride to enter bearing her dowry.
She is seated in the bridal chamber and becomes the queen.
Prophets and apostles offer her marriage gifts.
The martyrs present the blood which flowed from their necks.
The Bridegroom from on high gives His body and His blood
and John brings the choice vesture
from the waters of the Jordan, halleluia, halleluia.

Remember, Lord, the dead and grant repose
to those who were clothed in You at baptism
and received You at the altar and ate Your holy body
and drank Your blood, the chalice of salvation.
May they rejoice with Abraham in the Kingdom,
and may they stand at Your right hand and sing:
Glory to You, Lord, halleluia.
Grant repose, Lord, to Your servants.

Prayer of Incense

Lord our God, receive this fragrant incense
which we offer to You on this day of Your divine Epiphany
and grant that by it we may bring forth fruits of true repentance.

May we be enlightened by the light of Your face, full of light,
and be joined with those who praise You,
that we also may thank You and praise You with them,
our Lord and our God for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us.
Son, who by Your Epiphany set us free.

Christ, who save us by Your Epiphany,
pardon us and our departed.

Lord, we are overwhelmed by grief
for our faults and transgressions,
and there is no physician like You
to whom we may reveal our sins.
When You came to this earth, Lord,
it was not for the just but for sinners
that they may be purified by repentance.

As You have said, Lord,
it is not those who are well who need a physician,
nor the just and the righteous
who have need of repentance.
The physician first takes his fee
and then attends to the sickness.
But the sick who come to You for relief
are cured and further receive a reward.

But the paralytic cannot come to You
to show his sickness.
May Your compassion bring You to his side
that he may be healed.
Lord, may Your love make You go
in search of the senseless and the lost,
and may those who have abandoned You hear from You:
Do not remain in your sins.

On all occasions and by all means, Lord,
we call on Your graciousness.
With all sorts of discerning promptings
Your compassion seeks to give us life.
Praise to You from the penitent
who returned to the fold!
Glory to the Father who sent You,
and to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds.
The right hand of the Lord has raised us up.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
We are called not to die but to live
and to proclaim the works of the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 3: 15-18, 21-22 The Baptism of Jesus

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were baptized by John as a son of man, and received from the Father a testimony as His Beloved Son, and were made known to the people by the Holy Spirit descending on You in bodily form like a dove, prompt Your Churches to witness uncompromisingly to You in the world; we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, upon whom the Holy Spirit who in the beginning flew away and left humankind, now descended as on the head of the race of Adam to restore him to us, pour out Your Spirit on all humankind, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were baptized in the river to deliver the children of Adam from their sins, the sins of people and of society, prompt our leaders and rulers to dedicate themselves to the service of the millions of India, strengthen them in their task of putting an end to crying social inequalities by providing dignity of life and true freedom to all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N.... Pope of Rome and Head of the

Catholic Church, our fathers, N.... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N.... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Enlighten, Lord, our minds with the light of Your Knowledge, on this holy and glorious day of lights, and on all the days of our life, Christ our true God, who enlighten everyone born in the world, we beseech You and we will cry three times:

Lord have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil[9]

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy ! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord...P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing : Holy ! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and the children of men cry to You : Holy! Holy!
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
awaken us also, earthly ones, to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Great Treasury of Compassion,
lay in us the foundation of Your teachings.
Fountain of love, make to flow in us the channel of Your gifts.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one true God.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 30 (29) I will praise You, Lord, You have rescued me...

Response
O Lord, we cried to You for help
and You, our God, have healed us...
O Lord, You have raised us from the dead,
restored us to life from those who sink into the grave.
Sing psalms to the Lord, you who love Him.

To You be praise who by Your Epiphany
renew Your image that has grown old in corruption,
and You clothe it with the most beautiful vestments,
the wonderful mysteries which You give to Your Church,
You make us children of Your Father and partakers of Your Spirit.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise.....

Praise..... to the Hidden Being who was manifested in the river Jordan, the Glorious Light unceasingly dawning upon us and revealed in Trinity : the Father with the sound of whose voice the hearing of John was delighted; the Son with the touch of whom the hand of John was delighted; the Holy Spirit with the sight of whom the eyes of John were delighted; three eternal persons, one true God. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

God, who are long-suffering and full of tenderness, Source of all truth, Redeemer and Physician of humankind, You brought us into being when we were not, and again after the Head of our nature had sinned, You bestowed on us a new nature by the water of baptism for a second birth..... For all these, Lord, our hearts overflow with praises, and we offer thanksgiving to You, we the servants of Your divine Lordship who glory in the Spirit who makes us sons, prompting us to cry, "Abba, Father," with that cry in which the Spirit of God joins our spirit to make us aware that we are God's children.

Therefore we beseech You, Christ our Lord, be always with us. Make us also bear witness that we have become Your brothers by baptism, sons

of Your Father because of His love for us, and partakers of Your Spirit by His dwelling in us. Grant us, as You did to John who baptized You, unconquerable strength in the face of evil. Do not let us waste the little remnant of our life here on earth in vexation of soul. Keep away from our hearts all bitterness and resentment, all anger and jealousy. Grant that by tears of repentance as by a baptism we may from henceforth live in purity, in truth and love. Help us to sow righteousness around us, that human rights may be acknowledged by all, and peace be preserved all over the world. Visit us in Your grace that we may learn from You how to have love and compassion for all, and how to rejoice like You in the good actions of others, so that we may truly become one heart and one soul, and offer true praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Tell us, O John, chosen one, virgin and son of the barren,
what did you see on the waters of the river Jordan?
I saw the Spirit in the form of a dove
descending from on high and resting upon the head of the Son.
And the Father called out from the highest heaven:
This is My Son, My Beloved.

The Only Son of God comes from the heart of the Father.
He descends from the heights and is baptized in the river Jordan
and His baptism sanctifies us. Trembling John worships Him
and lays his hand on the head of his Lord,
while the voice of the Father is heard from on high
and the Spirit descends in the form of a dove
and rests upon His head.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

On the feast of the Epiphany of the Heavenly King
heaven and earth rejoice in Him.
From Him light shines on the creation dispelling all darkness,
as people turn away from untruth and sin.
The Church worships Him and proclaims
that He has established in her
baptism for the remission of debts and sins.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

A great wonder it was in the house of the Wakeful Ones
and among all peoples and tribes on earth,
that God came to a baptism not needed for the Holy One.
He came to sanctify the waters for the children of Adam
and to make them to be born again from the Spirit,
and become children of the Heavenly Father,
that He might enter them in the Book of Life in heaven.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.... P. 8

Psalm 36 (35) Sin speaks to the sinner....

Response
Our Lord, how precious is Your love!
Your children feast on the riches of Your home,
they drink from the streams of Your delight.
Source of all Life we see the light because of Your light.

You who by Your great manifestation
dispel and remove from the world
the darkness of error and the gloom of untruth,
be gracious to us, O God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise.....

Praise... to the Door of Mercy which is open to sinners, to the Harbour of Life who awaits mortals, to the Purifying Hyssop which washes those who are stained and the Cleansing Bath which purifies the defiled; to the Perfect Hope who yearns for the penitents, to the Supreme Redeemer who draws near to those who seek Him. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

God and Son of God, You came to us in Your love, and out of compassion You visited us in our fallen state. Good One, You revealed Your eternal mercy over Your creatures and would not suffer that humankind, the work of Your hands, should be lost. Good Shepherd, You came to seek for the sheep which had strayed..... Good Householder, You kindled the lamp of Your holy flesh and swept the house of the world clean of sin and found the lost coin, the image of Your Majesty, which was buried under passions and tarnished by sin. You cleansed and purified it in the healing crucible of baptism and by the water of a second birth and You regained for it the former beauty of its creation. For all these we offer praise and thanksgiving.

But we also beg and beseech You, Lord, deliver us from evil. By Your grace redeem us all from every stain of sin. Do not allow that any of us should be cast out of Your Kingdom or deprived of the gifts of Your Holy Spirit. In Your loving kindness enable us to be pure sanctuaries for Your service and holy temples for the dwelling of Your glory, that here and in the blessed life which does not decay we may be worthy to offer praise, thanksgiving and adoration, to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Today the waters of all springs are sanctified
when the Son descends and is baptized in them.
The words of the prophets about Him are fulfilled which said:
The waters saw You, O God, the waters saw You and trembled.
By Your baptism, O Lord, the waters are wonderfully endowed
with power, spirit and forgiveness.
Behold, all peoples and nations go down, are baptized and purified
and become children of God, the Heavenly One.

In the Jordan valley John preaches to those who come to him:
Bear fruits of repentance which are worthy of eternal life.
He sees the Lamb of God coming as any other man,
to be baptized in the water by him in fulfilment of the Scriptures.
John says to Him: How is it that You have come to me,
like one in need of purification, to be baptized?
It is I, rather, who need to be baptized by You and to be made pure.
Let it be now, said Jesus, and do always what God demands.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Jacob set up spotted rods in the watering places, secretly,
and his sheep gave birth to kids of the colour they saw.
Christ, the Lord of Jacob, set up the Cross in the water
which bore the passions and afflictions of our whole race.
The flock of Jacob were born by the help of the rods
but the flock of Christ is born from the water of baptism
that makes them inherit the Kingdom and life everlasting.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Jacob the just led his flock away from his country
and settled in the land promised to him by the Lord.
Christ in His love leads His flock
from the waters of baptism to the Heavenly Kingdom.
Come, beloved, let us come near that blessed mother
who opens her door to sinners and calls them to repentance.
Come, let us enter and be forgiven and inherit the Kingdom.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory ...P. 8.

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord ....P. 9.

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia....P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens ..... P. 13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord be gracious to us,
Son who set us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ who save us by Your Epiphany,
be gracious to us and to the whole world.

The Beloved Son of God becomes a son of man
from a daughter of David to unite our race with Himself.
He mingles with us and clothes us in the garment of Divinity
and by baptism makes us Gods.

The light of our Lord shines forth in the water
and darkness is shattered by the wonder.
He descends into the river and by His light
baptizes those who have been signed for baptism.

He sets fire to the fountain of life.
He mixes the Spirit with the streams of water,
that all who are baptized in them
may become a holy people to Him.

Wonderful is the glorious birth of baptism.
Those who are born of the Daughter of the Light are overjoyed
because they have become the exalted brothers of Christ.
Blessed are they who are born of water and the Spirit.

Glory to You, O Lord, from the penitent,
whom You make to return to Your house.
All honour to the Father who sent You.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels .... P. 15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ ..... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You , O God ..... P. 6

MEDITATION

Second Sunday
After the Epiphany of our Lord[10]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P. 3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Lord, make us worthy to feed with joy on the vision of Your glory, to take our delight in the splendour of Your face and to attain that bliss which You have prepared for us from the foundation of the world. Help us to make the royal robe of our baptism to shine that we may be worthy to sing songs of joy in voices of praise with thanksgiving in the dwellings of the just, for the glory of Your name, without ceasing, for ever. Amen.

Psalm 77 (76) :12-21 I remember the deeds of the Lord....

Response

Your ways, O God, are holy.
You are the God who works wonders.
You show Your power among the peoples.

The waters see You and tremble.
Your voice resounds in the storm.
Your lightning illumines the world.

To Your house belongs holiness, Lord of all.
It is You who lay its foundations on the rock of faith,
the doorway for all who hope in You.

You are the light which enlightens every creature.
By Your baptism You enlighten the whole world.
Enlighten us, our Lord, with the light of Your glorious baptism.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P. 3

Response

O Christ, by Your Epiphany, You rejoice
the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

The Lord of the seas and the rivers
stands out above the waters in the river.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

From heaven the Father cries out:
This is My Son, My Beloved.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Blessed is Christ who by His baptism
renews the world grown old in sin.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Let us offer praise to the Father, adoration to the Son
and thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.... to the Joy-giving Light by whose love we can approach the Father, the Creator of the light, to the Radiant Splendour by whose radiance we are brought near, to the Source of all Splendour, to the Wisdom of the wise by whose wisdom we reach out to the Great Eternal Mind. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Christ our God, Eternal Light, You were born alone from the Eternal Light. Son and Word of God the Father at the end of times and days You came forth to us from the Virgin's womb by a second birth, as Saviour and Redeemer. You are the Firstborn of the Father and You are God-with-us, born as a child from the holy womb of the Virgin. You are the Creator who by a sublime and indescribable dispensation commanded that a spring should rise from the earth and be divided into four heads, and water the garden of Eden. And now the fourfold stream of Your

Gospel flows in the whole habitable earth. You are He who by Your just and ineffable judgement overwhelmed the pride of the impious in the waters of destruction, and now You have descended like the dew on the fleece and overwhelmed the error of the ungodly by the knowledge of Your Godhead. You are He who healed the bitter tasting of Adam by the blood and water which flowed from Your side on the Wood. You are the propitiation for the whole world. You are the rock which flowed with water for the people and they drank of it. And now those who believe in You make springs of living water flow, and give instruction to the peoples.

Therefore we beg and beseech You, Lord, make us worthy to be enlightened always with the light of Your divine teachings. Keep from Your Church schisms and evil disputes. Pour out Your Spirit on the pastors and clergy to guide the believers and establish Your people in peace. May the world come to know You who are the true peace. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The Son of the King comes to be baptized in the river Jordan,
borne on the chariot of the Winged Creatures.
The sea on beholding Him flees and turns back
and the ships that see Him are wrecked.

People of the light, illumined by the sacrament of baptism
and clothed with the Everlasting Sun,
rejoice in the gift which has been made to You.
Walk in the light of faith and love and real hope.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Come, beloved, come, let us consider and ponder in our hearts
and realize how much we are indebted to the love of Jesus,
the fire of love which is come to cast on the earth, the fire
with which His heart is on fire that by Him we may be set on fire.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Our Lord Jesus, how sweet is Your love,
who like a skilful fisherman catches us in Your net.
Blessed is he who wishes to be caught in the net of Your love
and never leave it until the day of His death.

O our Saviour, the dead who received Your body at the table of life
and drank Your precious blood from the chalice of salvation,
raise them up from the grave without corruption
and clothe them in glory for they have hoped in You.

Prayer of Incense

Thanksgiving to You, Joy-giving Light,
for when we were plunged in darkness
You came to us from the Hidden Father and brought us light.
You healed the wounds left in us by sin,
the bitter fruits of disobedience.
You made us children of Your Eternal Father,
Your friends, and partakers of the Holy Spirit.

By this fragrant incense which we present to You, O Lord,
sanctify our inward and outward senses.
Preserve in us the gift of the inheritance of the children
gained at baptism, that we may praise You
and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son, who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth,
give her Your peace and keep her people by Your saving Cross.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

The fire of Your love incites us to praise Your Epiphany.
Truly astounding, it floods with light those who contemplate it.
The splendour of the mystery takes hold of us,
as we contemplate Your Epiphany, O You who were pleased,
to manifest Yourself in a body from a daughter of David.

At the sight of You the Jordan took fire with love
when You came to be baptized, that each one might know
the baptism with fire. The waters took fire
with flashes of fire, when the Living Fire
came to plunge Himself there in baptism.

When the Son of the King plunged in the waters to be baptized
the clouds were rent asunder like the veil of the house of the King,
when the Son walked the path of obedience all the way to death.
The voice of the Father resounded from on high: This is My Beloved.
And the Spirit descended and gave witness that it was He.

Glory to the Father who sent His Son to the earthly ones.
Adoration to the Son who was baptized in the Jordan by John
and to the Holy Spirit who pointed Him out to the crowds,
as with a finger. And may graciousness be poured out upon us,
on this feast and on all feasts.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds;
the right hand of the Lord raised me up.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
We are called not to die but to live,
and to proclaim the works of the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 1: 19-34 John's testimony of Jesus' messiaship.

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

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Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.... P. 1

Trisagion Holy ! Holy! Holy! Lord... P. 1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord..... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P. 7

Response

With those from on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we offer thanksgiving to You and we praise You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

At the baptism of the Son the heavens and the earth rejoice,
singing praise to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

The Holy Spirit in the bodily form of a dove descends and rests on Him.
And the Father cries out: This is My Son, My Beloved.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

Let us offer thanksgiving and adoration
to the great light appearing to us in the river Jordan.
By its appearance it dispels the gloom of untruth,
and from the waters of baptism, it clothes us in the garment of Divinity.

It is good to offer praise and glory,
adoration and the highest honour
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one true God, to Him be glory.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 49 (48) Hear this, all you peoples....

Response

Who can ever redeem himself
or pay to God the price for his life,
a ransom far beyond all he can offer?

Then who can be saved? Truly this is impossible for men.
But with God nothing is impossible.

To You be praise, Word of the Father,
who became man for our salvation.
You were born of a daughter of man and baptized by John.
You made darkness to flee from the earth
and in Your light we see the light.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.... to the Eternal Being who is the light by which every being is enlightened, who is praised and glorified by those in heaven and those on earth in the Trinity of the holy persons. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Lord God, Maker of all, Creator of all creatures, visible and invisible, who began Your creation with light that everything might be filled with light, You spread out the heavens like a vault and adorned it with the brilliance of the stars and other luminaries. You provided for the preservation of Your creation by different kinds of nourishment, giving life to its different species. You made us in Your image and likeness to preside over the creation and when we fell from this great state, by Your coming in the flesh, You raised us again to that divine condition by a second birth, a new creation, You the Lord in whose presence we are gathered at this hour of the Night Vigil.

Therefore be with us and among us and cast out the darkness of evil from us all. Fill us with the light which is above this world, that light which shone all around with splendour at Your birth in this world, and again manifested Your glory on the holy mountain of Tabor. Enlighten the eyes of our minds by the rays which come from You and make us children of the light by the gift of Your Holy Spirit. Make us stand before You with confidence that we may be found worthy of a place at the right hand of Your Majesty. May we become wholly resplendent and like to God, who is the source of all splendour in the creation, the Father, the Creator of the heavenly lights, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

At Your Epiphany, Lord of all, the Church rejoices exceedingly
and with the companies of her children she sings praise.
She is clothed with Your light, the garment of glory.

She is adorned and radiant with fire and Spirit. Halleluia, halleluia.
Blessed is He who multiplies her children through the new birth.

Blessed be Your Epiphany, Lord, and glorious Your manifestation,
who remain hidden when searched curiously by the Watchers or by people.
You are the new sun that illumines the creation.
You shine forth from the Father and enlighten us by Your Epiphany.
Halleluia, halleluia. Praise to You, Lord,
from Your Church which You have redeemed.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Today the nature of the water is sanctified
when the Creator of the seas is baptized in the Jordan,
and when the Holy Spirit who at the beginning hovered over them,
by His descent, makes them capable of bringing forth spiritual beings,
halleluia, halleluia, and to bear children to the Father with glory.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Come, beloved, let us offer thanksgiving to God
who chose us and made us His children by baptism.
By it our names are entered in the Book of Life
and we promise to Jesus to be His brothers,
halleluia, halleluia and to renounce Satan and his powers.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord..... P. 8

Psalm 53 (52) The fool has said in his heart.....

Response
O that Israel's salvation might come from Jerusalem!
When God delivers His people from bondage,
let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

You by whose Epiphany we contemplate all good things,
You make us worthy to be entered in the Book of Life.
Be gracious to all, O God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.... to the Unsearchable God, who while He is one God is praised and worshipped in trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And while He is three, He is reckoned as one God, from whom and by whom and through whom is the establishment of all that was and that will be, in heaven and on earth. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil.....

God the Word, Beloved Son of the Father, who descended from heaven softly like the rain, and were seen by the river in open manifestation; Resplendent One, whose rays of light remove the darkness from the world, and who by the manifest splendour of Your Economy give light to all the world, You who are without need were baptized in the river and left there the garment of immortality for those who were naked that they might be clothed in the garment of Divinity. Today, indeed, the glorious river has been enriched which brings forth wondrously spiritual sons who shine like stars in heaven. Today is accomplished what David said: Deep calls the deep, that they may be blessed by the waters of baptism of the Saviour. Today the thirst of the creation is quenched when the Lord of the waters is manifested by the river and cries out that all who thirst should be satisfied by Him.

We therefore, Your servants, glorify Your love of humankind and give thanks to You for all the works of Your grace which You have done for our salvation. And now we ask of You that You will establish our walking in Your ways and confirm our thoughts in Your hope. Make to dwell in us wonder at Your love and prompt in us marvelling at Your manifestation, that we may always thank and worship and praise You with joy, Lord, and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The Church rejoices and raises her voice in praise
for all the good things given to her:
The Lord who is hidden from all and exalted above the angels,
my people see Him on the altar, halleluia.
They eat Him and drink His blood
and every day take their delight in Him.

John looked at the Christ with wonder and astonishment
seeing how He went about with sinners
while he had shown Him to the crowds with these words:
Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
Halleluia. And he heard the Father from on high
crying out over His Son.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Church rejoices, exults and sings praise
to the Son of the King who breaks His body and gives it to her
and mixes for her the cup of His blood.
Every day she takes her delight in it, halleluia,
and is strengthened mightily to bear the sufferings of life.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

God destroyed the generation of Noah by the flood
because they were doing so much evil.
By the flood of water He cleansed the earth from their iniquities.
And now, in the holy Church, halleluia,
by the waters of baptism we are purified from all our iniquities.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory.....P. 8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord..... P. 9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia.... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.... P. 3

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
Son who set us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ, who save us by Your Epiphany,
be gracious to us and to the whole world.

He descended on earth in the form of a servant
to make us freeborn, we who were unworthy servants.
He humbled Himself to exalt our lowliness.

The Daughter of the King sings praise to the Beloved Son,
who purifies her with the glorious birth of baptism,
and puts an end to all other offerings and sacrifices.

Behold! The children of the Spirit come out of the water
and fill the womb of the woman who was desolate,
and by this second birth she is being renewed.

Among the children born out of marriage, one only is the firstborn,
but among the children born out of virginity,
the firstborn is not alone, all are firstborn.

Wonderful and glorious is the birth of baptism.
The firstborn of the Daughter of the Light are delighted,
because they have become the exalted brothers of Christ.
Blessed are they who are born of water and the Spirit.

Praise and glory to You, Lord, from the penitent,
whom You made to return to Your fold.
Honour to the Father who sent You.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels.... P. 15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ..... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

Third Sunday
After the Epiphany of our Lord[11]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P. 3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P. 1

Opening Prayer

Christ our God, You are the Tree of Life planted in the living source,the Father, the source that never fails. Make us worthy to approach You and to receive from You the fruits of life, the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Grant us to take our delight in them, You who are good and gracious, generous and compassionate. And we will praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 32(31) Happy the man whose offence is forgiven....

Response

I kept my sins secret and my frame was wasted.
I groaned all day long,
for night and day Your hand was heavy upon me.
Then I acknowledged my fault, not hiding my guilt,
and said: I confess my offence to the Lord.
And You, Lord, have forgiven the guilt of my sin.

If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves
and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins, God forgives us,
making us clean from every kind of wrong.
If we say that we do not commit sin,
we make God a liar and His word is not in us.

When Jesus the sinless Son of God and of a daughter of man,
descends in the river Jordan to receive baptism,

He washes away the sins of humankind.
The voice of the Father speaks of love to the Son of man,
and the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, rests upon Him.

Happy are those whose wrongs God has forgiven,
whose sins He has covered and buried in His mercy.
Happy is the man whose offences and sins
the Lord does not count against him.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us .....P. 3

Response

Christ is baptized in the river Jordan.
From Heaven the Father and the Spirit bear witness to Him.
The Spirit by His appearance, the Father by His voice:
This is My Son, the Well-beloved. In Him is My delight.

John cries out by the river Jordan:
This is the Life-giving Lamb of God.
And, for the crowd, pointing at Him with his finger he says:
It is He who takes away the sin of the world and saves it.

Christ comes from the heights and is manifested to us.
He is baptized in the river Jordan by John, His preacher.
The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove rests on His head
and the Father cries out: This is My Beloved.

Church of true believers sing praise to the Heavenly Bridegroom
who betrothed You in the river. In the assemblies of your people,
sing praise for His humility, He who sanctifies all,
when He is baptized with the sinners.

At the baptism of the Son of God in the river Jordan
John contemplates the mystery of the Trinity:
the Son as He is baptized; the Spirit as He descends on Him;
and the Father who cries out: This is My Son, My Beloved.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise.... to the One Eternal Godhead which was manifested by the river Jordan, the one glorious Trinity which today was revealed: the all Holy Father by a voice, the true Son by a touch, the adorable Spirit by a sight, three holy persons, one true God. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

Christ our God, Great Epiphany, who today were manifested to the world, the peoples ran to worship You when they saw and heard that the Life-giving Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world had come to baptism. They desired to see the divine Epiphany of the Great Sun of Righteousness who dispels darkness and evil from the world. O the Wonder which was worthy of God! O the Depths of Knowledge past finding ours! O the New Light which appears to the world today! Those on high rejoice at Your birth and exult at Your appearance. The children of men are glad and the angels make a joyful noise at Your baptism. Those on earth exult at Your manifestation in the river, and the spirits sing praise with their threefold cry, Holy! Today let all the prophets rejoice in their mysteries, because their symbols are revealed. Today let Jacob rejoice in the blessing over the lion cub of Judah. Today let Moses lead the praise with all the prophets. Today let the glorious Isaiah sing with David to the shoot of life which sprang up from the stock of Jesse. Today let all the apostles be glad and exult with Philip and Nathanael because, as was said of Him by Moses and the prophets, Jesus who is of Nazareth is born, who is God from God. The Pure has sprung from the pure Virgin and has purified the whole world to share His life with us.

Therefore we beseech You, Christ our God, who fulfilled all this Saving Economy out of love for us sinners that You will make us to be born anew unceasingly from the maternal womb of Your Church to whom You have entrusted Your great sacraments of life and we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

With the eye of prophecy David saw Christ
when He came to the river to be baptized in it.
He sounded his harp and sang: The waters saw You, O God,
the waters saw You, my Lord, and they trembled,
the depths of the abyss were stirred and dismayed,
the clouds dropped dew and the heavens thundered.
Glory to Your humility.

By Your Epiphany, Lord, the whole creation is saved,
the world that had fallen away from You finds life.
By Your baptism all the peoples are forgiven,
as they confess Your holy name, Jesus, our Saviour.
Blessed is Your Epiphany for our salvation
and blessed is Your baptism for the pardon of our sins.
Blessed is Your Father, the Lover of humankind, who sent You to us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

John saw the Son and he cried out and said:
This is the Lamb of God on whom the Father's favour rests.
He saw the heaven open and the Holy Spirit
in the form of a dove resting upon His head.
And the Fiery Ones cried out: Holy! Holy are You,
Son of the Most High who lowered Yourself
and clothed Yourself with a body to give life to the mortals.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Among the children of women, none has risen like John
who saw the Trinity by the river Jordan.
He baptized the Son of Life and saw the Spirit
and heard the voice of Him who said: This is My Son, My Beloved.
Blessed is the Father who sent His Beloved Son.
Blessed is the Son who sanctified us by His Baptism.
Praise to the Holy Spirit who forgives us our sins and is gracious to us.

O Lord, remember the dead and grant them repose
who put You on at baptism and received You at the altar,
who ate Your body and drank Your blood, the chalice of salvation.
May they rejoice with Abraham in the Kingdom
and may they stand at Your right hand and sing:
Glory to You, Lord. Halleluia, grant repose to Your servants.

Prayer of Incense

Lord God who sanctify the saints,
sanctify us by Your holy name.
Purify our hearts with the hyssop of Your meekness
and cleanse our thoughts by the abundance of Your gifts.

Lord, pardon our sins by the liberality of Your grace.
Receive the incense of Your worshippers.
Make it acceptable to Your graciousness
and we will offer to You unceasing praise and thanksgiving.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth,
give Her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

John drew near Jesus and laid his hand on his Maker.
The orders of Wakeful Ones were horrified.
They sheltered themselves behind each other.
The Powers were astounded by such a wonder,
as the dry leaf held the Live Coal without being burnt.

Those on high marvelled at what was taking place there:
the hand of flesh was not harmed by the Flame.
The Father tore the heavens asunder
and cried out over His Beloved:
This is My Son, do not doubt His coming.

The Flame stood by the side of John who was trembling,
and lowered Himself to be baptized by the earthly one
whom His hands had fashioned.
The Father tore the heavens asunder
and cried out over His Uniquely Beloved Son
with a voice the like of which had never been heard.

To You be praise, O Purifier of all impurities,
Forgiver of all iniquities who came to be baptized as a guilty one.
All those who are redeemed from their iniquity
by the waters of baptism will praise You, O Lord,
and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds.
The right hand of the Lord raised me up.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
We are called not to die but to live
and to proclaim the works of the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 3:22-36[A] He must increase and I must decrease.

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

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Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P. 1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you..... P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and the children of men cry to You: Holy! Holy!
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
awaken us also, earthly ones, to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Great Treasury of Compassion,
lay in us the foundation of Your teachings.
Fountain of love, make to flow in us the channel of Your gifts.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 56 (55) Have mercy on me, God, men crush me.....

Response

On the day when we call upon You
our enemies are put to flight.
Thus we know that God is on our side.
In God whose word we praise, in God we trust.
We shall not fear. What can mortal man do to us?

When the forerunner saw the Word of God who is without beginning
standing naked in the waters to be baptized as a needy person,
he cried aloud: How can I baptize You, O Holy One,
Lamb of God who take away the sin of the world?
O Dawn without evening, Great Prince of Peace!

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise.... to the Hidden Being..... P. 158

Hymn

Lord, our Lord, when John the Elect baptized You
the heights and the depths marvelled. The heavens opened
and from on high the Father cried out to the depths:
This is My Son, My Beloved.
And the Spirit flew down from the highest heaven
in the form of a dove and rested upon Your head.

Jesus, our Lord, as John was baptizing in the land of Judah,
he declared: After me comes He whose feet I am not worthy to touch,
even to untie the straps of His sandals.
He will give You the baptism with fire, with water and the Spirit
for He is the Lamb of God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Lord, our Lord, I entered the Holy Church
and I was filled with wonder at what I saw:
the stream of water, the ointment and sweet chrism,
and the priest standing, making the sign with the cross.

People enter as strangers and are baptized
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
And they become God's dwelling!

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Today the heights and the depths rejoice
and all raise their voice in praise of Him who, in His love,
lowered Himself and became a son of man,
and descended and was baptized in the river Jordan.
From His side He made to flow waters which are for us
the fountain of life, full of light,
and provision for the Kingdom.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.... P. 8

Psalm 59 (58):2-5 , 17-18 Rescue me, God from my foes....

Response
As for us we will sing of Your strength and acclaim Your love
for You are our stronghold, our refuge in the days of distress.
You are our strength, it is to You that we turn,
the God who shows us love.

The heavenly ones and the earthly ones sing praise
for the Epiphany of their Lord. They cry out:
Holy! Holy! Lord. Blessed are You who from Your place enlighten
the nations who are in darkness, by Your wonderful Epiphany.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise... to the Door of Mercy... P. 160

Hymn

Christ came to the son of the barren and bowed His head
before His servant, to be baptized by him. O the great marvel!
The legions of the Fiery Ones stirred and were bewildered
when they saw him, the creature of dust,
laying his hand upon the head of his Lord.
Suddenly the heavens opened and from on high
the Father cried out: This is My Son, My Beloved.

In January, the month of the victory of light,
the Joy-giving Light appears to us from the Virgin's womb,
brighter than the sun and brighter than John son of the barren.
He wills to be baptized like a guilty man,
to make atonement for our sins and remit our debts.
He turns to John saying: Take heart, son of the dust.
Come near, place your hand upon My head to baptize Me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

O Son of the King, what prompts You to seek baptism,
like an offender and from Your servant? John replied to his Lord.
How can he who is but chaff put his hand on the Flame?
If I come near You, O Lord, I will be consumed.
Our Lord replied: Simply lay Your hand upon My head, halleluia.
I will immerse Myself.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

On high the Spirit stirred and descended in the bodily form of a dove.
He came and suddenly rested upon His head.
Today in the river Jordan the invisible Trinity
is manifested at the baptism of the Son.
Blessed be Christ who by His baptism sanctifies all waters
for the forgiveness of sins, halleluia, for us all sinners.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory.... P. 8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord.... P. 6

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia.... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
Son who set us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ who save us by Your Epiphany,
be gracious to us and to the whole world.

The Beloved Son of God becomes a son of man
from a daughter of David to unite our race with Himself.
He mingles with us and clothes us in the garment of Divinity
and by baptism makes us Gods.

The light of our Lord shines forth in the water
and darkness is shattered by the wonder.
He descends into the river and by His light
baptizes those who have been signed for baptism.

He sets fire to the fountain of life.
He mixes the Spirit with the streams of water,
that all who are baptized in them
may become a holy people to Him.

Wonderful is the glorious birth of baptism.
Those who are born of the Daughter of the Light are overjoyed
because they have become the exalted brothers of Christ.
Blessed are they who are born of water and the Spirit.

Glory to You, O Lord, from the penitent,
whom You make to return to Your house.
All honour to the Father who sent You.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels.... P. 15

Concluding Prayer · Lord Jesus Christ..... P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

Fourth Sunday
After the Epiphany of our Lord[12]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P. 3

Doxology Glory be to the Father.... P. 1

Opening Prayer

Lord, at Your command the primordial waters were made fertile and produced all kinds of creatures, animals and birds which fly. Grant us then to drink from the waters of the new creation that flow from the river of life at Your baptism. Give us wings of the Spirit that we may fly and meet You when You come, and sing hymns of praise to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 42 (41) Like the deer that yearns.....

Response

Why should we be cast down, why groan within?
Our hope is in our God. We praise Him, our Saviour.
Be gracious to all, O God.

You who raised up our race by Your baptism
and adorned it with heavenly gifts,
be gracious to all, O God.

You who made us to be born of water and the Spirit
to become Your brothers and children of Your Father,
be gracious to all, O God.

You whom the Father from on High revealed by His voice:
This is My Son, My Beloved,
be gracious to all, O God.

You who are sent by the Father, the Creator of the light,
and illumine the earth and deliver it from untruth,
be gracious to all, O God.

Glory to the Father and thanksgiving to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit honour and adoration, one true God.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us..... P. 3

Response

People of the wedding feast, young and old,
come and offer praise to Christ
who has come to deliver us from our enslavement to sin.

Come, penitents and obtain pardon for your sins.
His door is open to all who ask
and He will not refuse what you ask of Him.

Penitents, hasten to come before God,
with tears like the sinful woman
and obtain from Him the pardon of all your sins.

Penitents, bathe with Your tears the door of pardon.
Jesus Himself is there who lent Himself
to be loved by a harlot.

Jesus is today and tomorrow,
yesterday and from age to age.
His rule is eternal. His Kingdom has no end.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord..... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise.... to the Sweet Scent of the eternal beauty of the Exalted Godhead, the Pure and Incorruptible Chrism; to Him who purifies the defilement of humankind, and leads us to blessedness; the Bestower of divine gifts, who is above the understanding and the naming of created beings, whom we acknowledge in unity, while He is known and

worshipped and praised in trinity. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening.....

Christ our God, Living Water and Fountain of Immortality, Source of Purity and River of Holiness, Sea of Wisdom beyond description, Abyss of Knowledge beyond comprehension and past finding out, who from the Holy of Holies of Your Divinity, and from the bosom of the Father who begot You, descended to us according to Your Economy, and came to us in Your loving kindness, You who are the Eternal Word, according to Your Economy of love for us, willed to become flesh. And according to the laws of human growth You grew in bodily stature and in wisdom, as a growing stream of water, flowing from the heart of the Father. (cf. Ez. 47). At the time of Your birth You were like water which only reaches the ankles and can easily be crossed, as You were born of a woman in the flesh, upon earth, and You were known as the son of Joseph and Mary.

At the time of Your divine baptism that stream increased. It reached to the knees and became a torrent. It was a sign of Your Divinity proclaimed to the world by the testimony of Your Father and the descent of Your Holy Spirit.

At the time of Your saving passion the water became strong and mighty and reached to the waist and began to cover him who entered it, as a sign of an unsearchable mystery. You appeared as an inexplicable prodigy to the whole world by reason of the portents which the creation suffered at the time of Your crucifixion, testifying that You were the Creator of these things.

When therefore Your divine resurrection shone forth and gave light to all the ends and corners of the earth on account of the violence of its current and the depth of its abyss the torrent was found impassable. The significance of this is that the true light of Your Wisdom became perfectly clear and Your Being was revealed to Your friends, and You were made known to the world as true God from true God, eternally and everlastingly, and You fulfilled Your Divine Economy beyond comprehension, like a violent flood which one cannot cross.

Then You gave us this stream itself in the baptism which is Yourself, for You are present in it for ever and You are seen in it by the eye of faith. In witness of this there is the saying of the prophet: The Lord is on the great waters. You are the water of life which flows from the holy of holies of Your Father, and You have come into this world which is a foul

sea, corrupted by sin, to give life to the fishes and renew their nature. That is why when You had chosen Peter and his companions, and had made them members of Your household You called them fishers of men. You gave them the command to go and make disciples and to baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

And now, Lord, we desire of Your goodness and bounty that You will guard all the children of holy baptism. Bestow on them the drink of Your spiritual knowledge and of living water from You, of which You said: He who drinks this water will not thirst any more, that we may be given life by You, and like fishes living in Your stream be easily caught by the net of the Gospel, and at the last day of the catch we may be placed in those mystic vessels which are the dwellings of Your Father's house, and there, in the company of all our departed praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

By Your Epiphany, Jesus, all are illumined.
The assemblies of the redeemed rejoice.
They offer thanks to You as they find mercy by Your manifestation.
The people who are forgiven by Your baptism
weave garlands of praise and sing hymns to You
who humbled Yourself of Your own will in the river Jordan,
receiving baptism in atonement for the sins of the world.

The Father and the Holy Spirit love the Son
who descended and became flesh, clothed in humility.
Of His own will He was born and received baptism.
His birth and His baptism are His gospel,
for by His birth He cancels the ancient debt
and by His baptism we are baptized.
Blessed is He who was baptized and made atonement for us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Blessed is Your Epiphany which today gladdens the creation.
Blessed is Your Baptism which today makes to shine our humanity.
Blessed are You, Firstborn, who bowed Your head to receive baptism.
Blessed are You, Lord who enrich us with Your gifts.

Blessed are You who show Your graciousness by visiting Your creation
and satisfy our needs, turning our poverty into riches.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

John, the Voice, cries out from the wilderness that He has come,
He who is to espouse the Daughter of the Great Light
and she must go to meet Him near the waters of the Jordan.
He does not manifest Himself to the bride until she has sought Him.
When she is burning with love for Him,
He appears like the sun and illumines her by His brightness.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Lord who from the glory of Your Majesty give glory to everything,
accept these gums which You bring forth from the sap of trees.
Collected by the work of man they are brought as offerings
to do away with the corruption brought into this world by sin.

Sweet Scent and Incorruptible Chrism
who are the source of all blessedness,
receive this incense which we offer to You.
Give us, who are stained by sin,
the fragrant purity of Your divine sweetness,
and make us dedicated workers in Your vineyard
for the praise and glory of Your name.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son, who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth,
grant her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace, who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

The prophets and the just were waiting for You, O Son of God.
They longed to see the day of Your great manifestation.
They all knew that You would come to be food and drink,
and desired eagerly their revelations to be fulfilled by You.

Son of God, You were expected to come to the earth, and the prophets
were looking for You whose manifestation they had announced,
a secret preserved through all generations.
But while they were longing eagerly for You,
they fell asleep in their own time.

All the just who looked with the eye of the Spirit fell asleep.
They looked to see Your day, as it had been announced.
All, prophets, kings and just men yearned for You.
And when You came You gladdened them,
fulfilling the desire of their hearts.

Glory to the Father who revealed the prophecies of the Epiphany.
Adoration to the Son who came and fulfilled the prophecies.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who showed that they were true.
Trinity exalted above all, to You the praise.

Peace, who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
God's grace has been revealed to the world,
not for any good deeds of our own,
halleluia, halleluia, halleluia,

but through the Saviour's kindness and love,
who saves us by the waters of rebirth,
and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 7:18-23 John's questioning about Jesus' Messiahship

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany p. 155

Trisagion Holy are You, O God..... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.... P. 1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord.... P. 1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P. 7

Response

With those from on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we offer thanksgiving to You and we praise You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

At the baptism of the Son the heavens and the earth rejoice,
singing praise to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

The Holy Spirit in the bodily form of a dove descends and rests on Him.
And the Father cries out: This is My Son, My Beloved.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

Let us offer thanksgiving and adoration
to the Great Light appearing to us in the river Jordan.
By its appearance it dispels the gloom of untruth
and from the waters of baptism, it clothes us in the garment of divinity.

It is good to offer praise and glory,
adoration and the highest honour
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one true God, to Him be glory.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 65(64) To You our praise is due in Sion, O God....

Response

To You we owe a hymn of praise, O God, in Your holy place.
To You must vows be fulfilled who hear our prayers.
To You all flesh must turn because of their wicked deeds.
We are overcome by our sins, it is You who pardon them.

When You were baptized in the river like a guilty man, our Lord,
it was to become the head of the children of adoption.
By Your divine baptism You made the renewal of our race,
defeating the Serpent, the Evil One who had led us astray out of envy.
You are the Dawn without evening. You are the great Prince of Peace.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Praise... to the Eternal Being who is the light... P. 170

Hymn

Our Lord came to John to be baptized by him in the river Jordan.
Quite moved, John said: It is I who need to be baptized by You.
But Jesus answered: Let it be done at present. It is good for us
always to do what is right and fulfil the words of the prophets.

Blessed is the day of Your baptism,
the heights and the depths glory in it,
O You whose Divinity is from above and Incarnation from below.
David the prophet was longing for this mystery when he said:
That I may become whiter than snow,
cleanse my whole being with the hyssop of purity.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The poor and the needy ask for the waters of life
in which Christ was baptized
to quench their thirst from them, and to obtain the new life.
Through the waters of baptism and the Holy Spirit
they become heirs to the heavenly Kingdom.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Come, beloved, let us receive and drink the life-giving water
in which Christ was baptized, for grace abides in it.
Jesus our Lord bears witness to this.
He assures His disciples that the rivers and fountains
are the water of baptism from which all peoples must drink.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... p. 3

Psalm 67(66) O God, be gracious and bless us....

Response

O God, be gracious to us and bless us,
and let Your face shed its light upon us,
that Your ways may be known on earth
and Your saving power among the nations.

Christ the Bridegroom, who by Your Epiphany
save Your Church, giving her Your own knowledge,
sanctify our bodies, forgive our offences and cleanse our faults.
And make us all worthy, by Your Epiphany, to sing praise to You.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the second Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise.... to the Unsearchable God... P. 172

Hymn

Adam sinned and inherited great sufferings
and his children after him suffered them all.
But it pleased God to raise him up from his fall.
Glory to Him who came and raised him up.

His conception was for us a source of blessings.
His birth our treasure of joys.
His baptism the offering for our pardon.
His death the sacrifice for our life.
By His resurrection He caused death to be distressed.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As He entered into the womb,
He entered into the river.
As He entered into the grave,
He entered into the marriage chamber.
By all these entrances He leads humanity to perfection.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

He revealed His glory through His greatness.
He revealed His passion through His humanity.
He revealed His love through His goodness.
He revealed His judgement through His righteousness.
He shares them with those who confess Him.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory... P. 8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
Son who set us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ who save us by Your Epiphany,
be gracious to us and to the whole world.

He descended on earth in the form of a servant
to make us freeborn, we who were unworthy servants.
He humbled Himself to exalt our lowliness.

The Daughter of the King sings praise to the Beloved Son,
who purifies her with the glorious birth of baptism,
and puts an end to all other offerings and sacrifices.

Behold! the children of the Spirit come out of the water
and fill the womb of the woman who was desolate,
and by this second birth she is being renewed.

Among the children born out of marriage, one only is the firstborn,
but among the children born out of virginity,
the firstborn is not alone, all are firstborn.

Wonderful and glorious is the birth of baptism.
The firstborn of the Daughter of the Light are delighted,
because they have become the exalted brothers of Christ.
Blessed are they who are born of water and the Spirit.

Praise and glory to You, Lord, from the penitent,
whom You made to return to Your fold.
Honour to the Father who sent You.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels...P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ....P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P.6

MEDITATION

Fifth Sunday
After the Epiphany of our Lord[13]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P. 3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant, Lord, that we may always wear the garment of holiness and be clothed in divinity, and rejoice in the remembrance of Your divine manifestation, and proclaim openly, like John, that You are the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. May You also, then, witness to us before Your Father on the day when You come to judge the living and the dead, that we may enter into the glory of Your Kingdom and there offer praise unceasingly to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 33 (32) Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just...

Response

Shout for joy before the Lord, you just.
Give thanks to Him and sing new songs.
Play sweetly upon the harp with sounds of gladness.

You who manifested the wondrous light of Your truth
to Your people who believed in You and accepted Your yoke,
You are blessed for ever, Lord, God of all creatures.

You who in ancient times created our nature in Your image
and again in Your love completely renewed it by Your baptism,
You are blessed for ever, Lord, God of all creatures.

Glory to the Father and thanksgiving to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit honour and adoration. One true God.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

O Christ, by Your Epiphany You rejoice
the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

The Lord of the seas and the rivers
comes up out of the water, in the river.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

From heaven the Father cries out :
This is My Son, My Beloved.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Blessed is Christ who by His baptism
renews the world grown old in sin.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Let us offer praise to the Father, adoration to the Son
and thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise..... to the Uncreated Nature, whose Being cannot be comprehended; to the Fountain of good things and Constant Spring of blessings; to Him whose perfection the heavens reveal and whose salvation the heights proclaim, when the Father called from His dwelling place on high and revealed that Jesus is the Splendour of His Glory and sent the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove which rested upon His head. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Christ, the Word which cannot be uttered by the voice, Great Mind which cannot be comprehended by the rational minds, Sun of Righteousness which came forth from a virgin, Splendour of Glory which gave light by Your appearing to those who were sitting in darkness, Strength and Right Hand of the Father, who stretched forth Your hand and drew us from the many waters of sin, Bridegroom of Truth of whose coming the Bridegroom's friend, the son of the barren, prophesied, Giver of Purity who approached the baptism of repentance, David beheld this

willing emptying of self when he said: The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. This is the Word of the Father whom John called the Lamb of God, and the God of Glory thundered : This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. This is My only Son, and it is not that in Him dwells My Eternal Son, but He is one in Godhead and in humanity. The doors of heaven were opened which the transgression of the commandment had closed. The Spirit which had been taken away from us by the sentence of judgement returned to us. The sentence was annulled which said : My Spirit shall not dwell with man any more. And that was heard which said: You are the temple of God. And the Spirit of God dwells in you. O the riches of tender love which were poured out on sinners by grace! O the Compassion which had compassion on the creation! Now the head of the Serpent who deceived us has been crushed in the waters. We draw water from the Fountain of Salvation in joy and we cry out and say: A fountain of life is with You, Christ our God, and in Your light, Son of Truth, we see the light of the true Father. From Your side we quench our thirst with the water of life, and by Your living blood we are cleansed from our faults. We are not terrified by the torrent of the cloud of death when we pass over. And because You are with us we do not fear the Evil One, and we beseech You to join us with the assemblies of Your saints and we will praise You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

John, son of Zechariah, was baptizing in the river Jordan.
Seeing Christ coming to be baptized, he said to the crowd:
This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world
and saves it. And as soon as Christ rose out of the water,
John heard the voice of the Father who said:
This is My Son, My Beloved. And the Holy Spirit
in the form of a dove descended and rested upon His head,
halleluia, that we might be sanctified.

Fair were the words of John, as he said to Christ:
Lord, I am afraid of coming near to You, for I am Your servant,
and I dare not lay my hand upon You, the Flame.
If I venture to draw near, Your fire will consume me.
But the Lord said: Behold, the waters rise up and beseech.
It is your hand that shall be laid upon My head,
halleluia, and I shall be baptized by You.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Priests and kings of the children of Israel
were anointed with the holy and precious ointments.
It was the Churches that were signified by these:
baptism the noble mother of the new spiritual children.
In baptism the sinner is anointed with Christ,
the source of life, halleluia, and his sins are forgiven.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The Church said to John: Who was it that you baptized
that the water bubbled up and the crowds were stirred?
The heavens opened and were glad,
the Father called out from on high
and the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove.
And he replied to her: It is the Bridegroom, the Beloved Son of God.
It is He who has betrothed you to Himself.
Come, bow down before Him and worship Him.

O Lord, remember the dead and grant them repose
who put You on at baptism and received You at the altar,
who ate Your body and drank Your blood, the chalice of salvation.
May they rejoice with Abraham in the Kingdom
and may they stand at Your right hand and sing:
Glory to You, Lord, halleluia.
Lord, grant repose to Your servants.

Prayer of Incense

Sweet Perfume, You breathed Your odour throughout the world
and nature knew You to be her Creator
and the peoples believed in You
and turned away from false worship
and confessed that You are true God and true man.

In Your love, Lord, receive the perfume of our incense.
In Your compassion, sanctify us in abundance.
Grant us the pardon of our offences and sins.
Be gracious to our dead who died in the faith,
that with them we may praise You
and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us.
Son, who by Your Epiphany set us free.

Christ, who save us by Your Epiphany,
pardon us and our departed.

Lord, we are overwhelmed by grief
for our faults and transgressions,
and there is no physician like You
to whom we may reveal our sins.
When You came to this earth, Lord,
it was not for the just but for sinners
that they may be purified by repentance.

As You have said, Lord,
it is not those who are well who need a physician,
nor the just and the righteous
who have need of repentance.
The physician first takes his fee
and then attends to the sickness.
But the sick who come to You for relief
are cured and further receive a reward.

But the paralytic cannot come to You
to show his sickness.
May Your compassion bring You to his side
that he may be healed.
Lord, may Your love make You go
in search of the senseless and the lost,
and may those who have abandoned You hear from You:
Do not remain in Your sins.

On all occasions and by all means, Lord,
we call on Your graciousness.
With all sorts of discerning promptings
Your compassion seeks to give us life.
Praise to You from the penitent
who returned to the fold!

Glory to the Father who sent You,
and to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds.
The right hand of the Lord has raised me up.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
We are called not to die but to live
and to proclaim the works of the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Matthew 11:2-15 Jesus' testimony about His Messiahship to John's disciples.

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany p. 155

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P. 1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P. 1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P. 7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and the children of men cry to You: Holy! Holy!
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
awaken us also, earthly ones, to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Great Treasury of Compassion,
lay in us the foundation of Your teachings.
Fountain of love, make to flow in us the channel of Your gifts.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one true God.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 80 (79) O Shepherd of Israel, hear us....

Response

Rouse Your victorious might from slumber,
O Lord, and come to our help.
God of all cosmic forces restore us,
let Your face shine on us and we shall be saved.

To You be praise who by Your Epiphany
renew Your image that has grown old in corruption,
and You clothe it with the most beautiful vestments,
the wonderful mysteries which You give to Your Church.
You make us children of Your Father and partakers of Your Spirit.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise..

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise... to the Hidden Being.... p. 158

Hymn

The Spirit descended from on high
and sanctified the waters while hovering over them.
Through John's baptism, while resting upon one He forgave all.
Now He descends and dwells in all who are born of the water.

When the earth was corrupted it was renewed by the water,
and the body of the earthly Adam which was wasting away
is now renewed by the power of the water.
The priests of the new covenant repair and rebuild our bodies.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The flock of Christ leaps for joy, they crowd for baptism.
Through the water they are clothed
in the likeness of the Glorious and Life-giving Cross.
The whole creation looks on, as they are sealed with the Cross.

From age to age and for ever. Amen

Behold, today our offences are blotted out
and our names are entered in the Book of Life.
The priest washes away our sins in the water
and Christ writes our names in heaven.
Our joy is twofold: the blotting out and the writing.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.... P. 8

Psalm 92(91) It is good to give thanks to the Lord....

Response

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to sing praise to Your name, Most High,
to proclaim Your love in the morning
and Your faithfulness in the watches of the night.

You who by Your great manifestation
dispel and remove from the world
the darkness of error and the gloom of untruth,
be gracious to us, O God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise... to the Door of Mercy ... P. 160

Hymn

Two messengers revealed how to recognize the Beloved Son:
the star of light and John;
one by its appearance and the other by his voice.
They truly proclaimed the Word who is the Light,
and both served Him, the voice and the light of the star.

The light announced His manifestation and the voice His wisdom.
The Firstborn is blessed by His messengers.

John was first to preach and he preached from nearby.
But preachers came also from far and announced the Firstborn:
the wise men who revealed Him from outside
while John announced Him from inside.
The voice met the voices and resounded.
Blessed is He who was manifested to the crowds.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Saviour appeared to the blind
and they could see one another.
The sun let its rays shine and they were taken out of the darkness.
The Bright Light sent forth its radiance
and made them children of light.
They announced that the Light had dawned,
and the ears of the deaf and the eyes of the blind were opened.
Praise to the Rising Sun.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

John looked at Him and cried out:
This is the Lamb of God grown up to full maturity
and fit to be a sacrificial victim.
The Preacher did not fear, as he added:
Evildoers will slay Him,
but this will be a sacramental sprinkling,
that there may be forgiveness of sins by His blood.
Blessed is He who makes atonement for our sins.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens ... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
Son who set us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ who save us by Your Epiphany,
pardon us and our departed.

The Beloved Son of God becomes a son of man
from a daughter of David to unite our race with Himself.
He mingles with us and clothes us in the garment of Divinity,
and by baptism makes us Gods.

The light of our Lord shines forth in the water
and darkness is shattered by the wonder.
He descends into the river and by His light
baptizes those who have been signed for baptism.

He sets fire to the fountain of life.
He mixes the Spirit with the streams of water,
that all who are baptized in them
may become a holy people to Him.

Wonderful is the glorious birth of baptism,
those who are born of the Daughter of the Light are overjoyed
because they have become the exalted brothers of Christ.
Blessed are they who are born of water and the Spirit.

Glory to You, Lord, from the penitent ,
whom You make to return to Your house.
All honour to the Father who sent You,
and to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels....P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord, Jesus Christ ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God ... P.6

MEDITATION

Sixth Sunday
After the Epiphany of our Lord [14]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

O Root of Life divine by nature, O Treasure of all divine gifts, You submitted to baptism to bestow on us to become children of the new creation by the second birth of water and the Spirit. Grant that we may be purified from all stains and enlightened by Your light. And may we be united with the heavenly companies to celebrate You with joy, on this festival of light, and on that other festival whose joys do not come to an end, praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 72 (71) O God, give judgement to the king...

Response

The King shall defend the poor of the people
and save the children of the needy...
He shall descend like raindrops on the earth.

Blessed be the Lord God, the Lord of the whole creation.
He alone does marvellous things.
His glory fills all the earth.

To Your house belongs holiness, Lord of all.
It is You who lay its foundation on the rock of faith,
the doorway for all who turn to You.

You are the light which enlightens every creature.
By Your baptism You have enlightened the whole world.
Enlighten us, Lord, with the light of Your glorious baptism.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P. 3

Response

Christ is baptized in the river Jordan.
From heaven the Father and the Spirit bear witness to Him.
The Spirit by His appearance, the Father by His voice:
This is My Son, My Beloved. In Him is all My delight.

John cries out by the river Jordan:
This is the Life-giving Lamb of God.
And for the crowd pointing at Him with his finger he says:
It is He who takes away the sin of the world and saves it.

Christ comes from the heights and is manifested to us.
He is baptized in the river Jordan by John, His preacher.
The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove rests on His head
and the Father cries out: This is My Beloved.

Church of true believers sing praise to the heavenly Bridegroom
who betrothed you in the river. In the assemblies of your people,
sing praise for His humility, He who sanctifies all,
when He is baptized with the sinners.

At the baptism of the Son of God in the river Jordan
John contemplates the mystery of the Trinity:
the Son as He is baptized; the Spirit as He descends on Him;
and the Father who cries out: This is My Son, My Beloved.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise..

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise.. to the One Living and Eternal Godhead... P. 151

Hymn *Madrosho*

In the desert John baptizes sinners and he preaches
that they may repent and turn to the Kingdom.

But You, O Living One who purify all by the hyssop of Your purity,
why are You found among the sinners who seek baptism?
You are pure holiness unto the priests to whom You are sent.
It is You who confer purity on the impure
and who give pardon to all those who repent.

As many people were coming to John with questions
concerning the Christ who had been announced,
the Bridegroom appeared at the banquet, as the day,
and by His Epiphany gladdened all the wedding guests.
The Voice, the son of the barren, was deeply moved.
The Forerunner of the Word was eagerly waiting
for Him who is the Saviour of the world.

With the voice he announced and with the finger he showed Him
to the bride of the Light, and she drew near and worshipped Him.
She bathed and rose and stood looking at Him
ardently longing for Him, and John taught her:
Behold, the priest, the sacrifice and the lamb,
the acceptable offering and the priest of the New Covenant.
It is He who takes away the sin of the world.

By Your Epiphany all are illumined.
The assemblies of the redeemed rejoice and offer thanks to You
for they find mercy by Your manifestation.
The people who are forgiven by Your glorious baptism
weave garlands of praise and sing hymns to You,
Good One who of Your own will come to humble Yourself
receiving baptism in the river Jordan,
and making atonement for the world with the hyssop of Your purity.

The Father with the Spirit loves the Son
who lowered Himself and became flesh, clothed in humility.
His birth and His baptism proclaim how He abased Himself,
in the manger and in the Jordan; they are one and cannot be separated.
By His birth He cancels our debts
and in the water He sanctifies our baptism.
Blessed is He who is baptized to make atonement for the world.

There was at that time the baptism with water.
John never baptized anyone with the Spirit.
His baptism was for repentance.
He did not proclaim the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
Who would dare say that he is not moved
when our Lord is baptized with the Holy Spirit in the Jordan?

Prayer of Incense

Praise to You, Lord, who of Your own choice accepted a human birth.
Your graciousness inclined You to baptism.
Your immense love opened for us the way of the new birth
by the purification of our sins and the effacement of our faults.

Purify us then, Lord, by Your baptism
and by Your Divine Epiphany remit our debts.
Receive from our poor hands this fragrant incense
and spread graciousness and forgiveness before You
that we may glorify and thank You
with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
Son, who sent us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ, who save us by Your Epiphany,
Pardon us and our departed.

Lord, the sickness of our faults and sins always besets us,
and there is no physician like You to whom we may reveal them.
Lord, it is not for the just that You came upon earth,
but for sinners, that by repentance they may be purified.

Lord, as You said, it is not those who are well who need
the physician, nor the just or the perfect who need repentance.
The physician takes his pay and then attends to the patient;
but the sick who meet You and ask Your help
receive a reward, besides being cured.

However the paralytic cannot come to show You his sickness.
May Your compassion bring You to his bedside so that his sickness
may leave him. Lord, may Your love make You go in search
of the senseless and the lost, and Your mouth repeat
to those who abandoned You: Do not remain in your sins!

On every occasion and by every means, Lord, we invoke Your grace.
By all sorts of devices Your compassion wishes to give us life.
The penitent who have returned to the fold sing glory to You,
honour to the Father who sent You and praise to the Holy Spirit.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds;
the right hand of the Lord has raised me up.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
We are called not to die but to live,
and to proclaim the works of the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Mark 6:7-13 Instructions to the Twelve for their Mission

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany p. 155

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... p. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P. 1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.... P. 7

Response

With those from on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we offer thanksgiving to You and we praise You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

At the baptism of the Son the heavens and the earth rejoice,
singing praise to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

The Holy Spirit in the bodily form of a dove descends and rests on Him.
And the Father cries out: This is My Son, My Beloved.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

Let us offer thanksgiving and adoration
to the great light appearing to us in the river Jordan.
By its appearance it dispels the gloom of untruth
and from the waters of baptism, it clothes us in the garment of divinity.

It is good to offer praise and glory,
adoration and the highest honour
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one true God, to Him be glory.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 96 (95) O sing a new song to the Lord....

Response

Give the Lord, you families of peoples,
give the Lord the glory of His name...

He comes to rule the earth.
He will rule the peoples with justice and truth.

Blessed is the Sun of Righteousness
who today dawned on the creation.
He fulfils the words of the prophets
who had prophesied concerning Him in the Spirit.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise... to the Eternal Being who is the Light... P. 170

Hymn

Blessed are you, John, who laid your right hand on your Maker.
And you heard the Father, as He cried out and said:
This is My Son, My Beloved. Halleluia, halleluia.
Glory to Him who sent His Son to us.

Jesus our Saviour, today You are baptized in the river Jordan
not that You have need of baptism,
but that we might be set free from our enslavement to sin.
Halleluia, halleluia, glory to Him who sent You.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Christ is baptized in the river
for the salvation of our race of mortals.
He gives us His body and His pure blood as a pledge,
halleluia, halleluia, that we will be raised to life.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

From the heights unto the depths,
the voice is heard on the river Jordan:
This is My Son, My Beloved. For Him the just were waiting.
He manifested Himself at the end, halleluia, halleluia.
Blessed is our Lord for His Epiphany.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...p. 8

Psalm 97(96) The Lord is King, let earth rejoice...

Response
A harvest of light is sown for the righteous
and joy for all good people.
You, righteous, rejoice in the Lord
and praise His holy name.

Those from on high and those from below sing praise
at the Epiphany of the Son, their Lord.
They cry out: Holy! Holy are You, O Lord, who from Your place,
by Your baptism, enlighten the people who are in darkness.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

As on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise... to the Unsearchable God... P. 172

Hymn

Blessed are you small river Jordan,
the Fulness of Being descends and is baptized in you,
the drops of whose rain you cannot contain
for He is the Flood of Life that cleanses all offences.
Blessed are your flowing waters,
which were purified by the descent of the Holy One,
who descended and bathed in you, the Baptism
who when He was baptized released the springs of forgiveness for us.

Blessed are you, O son of the barren woman,
whose hand was worthy to touch His head.
You baptized the Baptizer who baptizes peoples
by the outpouring of fire and the Holy Spirit.
Blessed are you for your discernment, who were moved not to draw near
and for your understanding, who were commanded and did not resist.
As the heavens were torn open the Wakeful Ones marvelled,
and gave glory because you baptized their Creator.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Blessed are you, great among all prophets,
who baptized the Lord of all prophets.
From afar they longed for Him, they desired Him earnestly,
yet they could not see the Son, the Christ.
But you laid your hand on the head of the Zealous One
who clothed Himself with the law. Upon you descended Elijah,
though he did not come, you made him present by your action.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed are you, Mary, who were found worthy
to be the Mother of the Lord of the whole creation.
Blessed are you, John the Preacher,
who baptized his body in holiness.
As He descended and was baptized in the flowing waters
He hid in them a mysterious weapon
that anyone who is baptized in them
can fight with it against the Adversary.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory... P. 8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P. 9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P. 13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
Son who set us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ, who save us by Your Epiphany,
be gracious to us and to the whole world.

He descended on earth in the form of a servant
to make us freeborn, we who were only servants.
He humbled Himself to exalt our lowliness.

The Daughter of the King sings praise to the Beloved Son,
who purifies her with the glorious birth of baptism,
and puts an end to all other offerings and sacrifices.

Behold! The children of the Spirit come out of the water
and fill the womb of the woman who was desolate,
and by this second birth she is being renewed.

Among the children born out of marriage, one only is the firstborn,
but among the children born out of virginity,
the firstborn is not alone, all are firstborn.

Wonderful and glorious is the birth of baptism.
The firstborn of the Daughter of the Light are delighted,
because they have become the exalted brothers of Christ.
Blessed are they who are born of water and the Spirit.

Praise and glory to You, Lord, from the penitent
whom You made to return to Your fold.
Honour to the Father who sent You.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P. 15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God .... P. 6

MEDITATION

Seventh Sunday
After the Epiphany of our Lord[15]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Opening Prayer

Lord, make us worthy to feed in joy on the vision of Your glory, to take our delight in the splendour of Your face and to attain that bliss which You have prepared for us from the foundation of the world. Help us to make the royal robe of our baptism to shine that we may be worthy to sing songs of joy in voices of praise with thanksgiving in the dwellings of the just, for the glory of Your name, without ceasing, for ever. Amen.

Psalm 78 (77) Give heed, my people, to my teaching...

Response

The things we have heard and understood,
the things our fathers told us,
the glories of the Lord and His might
and the marvellous deeds He has done,
we will sing from generation to generation.

He chose David to be His servant
and took him from the sheepfold,
from the care of the ewes He called him
to be shepherd of Israel, His own possession.
He tended them in singleness of heart
and led them with a discerning mind.

When Jesus, Son of God and Sinless Son of a daughter of man,
descends in the river Jordan to receive baptism,
He washes away the sins of humankind.
The voice of the Father speaks of love to the Son of man
and the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, rests upon Him.

Happy are those whose wrongs God has forgiven,
whose sins He has covered and buried in His mercy.
Happy is the man whose offences and sins
the Lord does not count against him.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

O Christ, by Your Epiphany, You rejoice
the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

The Lord of the seas and the rivers
stands out above the water in the river.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

From heaven the Father cries out:
This is My Son, My Beloved.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Blessed is Christ who by His baptism
renews the world grown old in sin.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Let us offer praise to the Father, adoration to the Son
and thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit.
Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany.

Praise..... to the Joy-giving Light....P.165

Hymn *Madrosho*

God in His mercy has bent down and descended
to mingle His compassion with the water,
and blend His majestic nature

with the feeble body of our human nature.
He used the water as the occasion to come down
and dwell in us, just as mercy found occasion
to come down and dwell in a womb.
O the abundance of God's mercy
which sought out every occasion to dwell in us!

The Bride, the Daughter of the Nations,
approaches the Preacher asking concerning the Bridegroom,
her Lord, to whom she had been promised:
When will the Resplendent One appear? I have longed eagerly
to meet Him, that I may find my delight in Him.
She hears the Preacher of Truth crying out:
Behold, the True Light has come
who is the radiance of the Eternal Father.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Who has ever seen a bridegroom
offering Himself in sacrifice at His marriage feast?
Or a bride rejoicing in the slaughter of her spouse
who gives His body as food for her sake
and mixes the cup of His blood for her beloved ones?
And she carries His Cross and takes it in procession
and with it she signs her people for their salvation.
Blessed is the Bridegroom who saves her by His blood.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The vessel once fashioned out of the dust from the soil
is given greater beauty by the water
and receives strength from the fire,
but if it slips and is broken, it cannot be mended.
We are the vessels beautified by grace
which must be treated with care, in righteousness,
for there is no second mending.

O Lord, remember the dead and grant them repose
who put You on at baptism and received You at the altar,

who ate Your body and drank Your blood, the chalice of salvation.
May they rejoice with Abraham in the Kingdom
and may they have a place at Your right hand and sing:
Glory to You, O Lord, halleluia.
Lord, grant repose to Your servants.

Prayer of Incense

Thanksgiving to You, Joy-giving Light,
for when we were plunged in darkness
You came to us from the Hidden Father and brought us light.
You healed the wounds left in us by sin,
the bitter fruits of disobedience.
You made us children of Your Eternal Father,
Your friends, and partakers of the Holy Spirit.

By this fragrant incense which we present to You, O Lord,
sanctify our outward and inward senses.
Preserve in us the gift of the inheritance of the sons
gained at baptism, that we may praise You
and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth
give her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

John drew near Jesus and laid his hand on his Maker.
The orders of the Wakeful Ones were horrified.
They sheltered themselves behind each other.
The Powers were astounded by such a wonder,
as the dry leaf held the Live Coal without being burnt.

Those on high marvelled at what was taking place there:
the hand of flesh was not harmed by the Flame.
The Father tore the heavens asunder

and cried out over His Beloved:
This is My Son, do not doubt His coming.

The Flame stood by the side of John who was trembling,
and lowered Himself to be baptized by the earthly one
whom His hands has fashioned.
The Father tore the heavens asunder
and cried out over His Uniquely Beloved Son
with a voice the like of which had never been heard.

To You be praise, O Purifier of all impurities,
Forgiver of all iniquities who came to be baptized as a guilty one.
All those who are redeemed from their iniquity
by the waters of baptism will praise You, O Lord,
and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds,
the right hand of the Lord raised me up.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
We are called not to die but to live
and to proclaim the wondrous deeds of the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 14:12-24 The Parable of the Wedding Feast.

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany P.155

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father....P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy !Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.... P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and the children of men cry to You: Holy! Holy!
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all. O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
awaken us also, earthly ones, to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Great Treasury of Compassion,
lay in us the foundation of Your teachings.
Fountain of love, make to flow in us the channel of Your gifts.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one true God.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 98 (97) Sing a new song to the Lord...

Response

Let the sea and all within it, thunder;
the world and all its peoples.
Let the rivers clap their hands
and the hills ring out their joy at the presence of the Lord
who has made known His salvation.

Blessed is the Light of Light.
Blessed is the God of God.
He enlightens the world with His rays.
He has purified the earth by His baptism.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany.

Praise.... to the Hidden Being.... p.158

Hymn

At Your Epiphany, Lord of all, the Church rejoices exceedingly
and with the companies of her children she sings praise.
She is clothed with Your light, the garment of glory.
She is adorned and radiant with fire and Spirit. Halleluia, halleluia.
Blessed is He who multiplies her children through the new birth.

Blessed be Your Epiphany, Lord, and glorious Your manifestation,
who remain hidden when searched curiously by the Watchers or by people.
You are the New Sun that illumines the creation.
You shine forth from the Father and enlighten us by Your Epiphany.
Halleluia, halleluia. Praise to You, Lord,
from Your Church which You have redeemed.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Today the nature of the water is sanctified
when the Creator of the seas is baptized in the Jordan,
and when the Holy Spirit who at the beginning hovered over them,

by His descent makes them capable of bringing forth spiritual beings, halleluia, halleluia, and to bear children to the Father with glory.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Come, beloved, let us offer thanksgiving to God
who chose us and made us His children by baptism.
By it our names are entered in the Book of Life,
and we promise to Jesus to be His brothers, halleluia, halleluia,
and to renounce Satan and his powers.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 99 (98) The Lord is king, the peoples tremble...

Response

The Lord is king, a king who loves what is right,
who has established equity, justice and right,
who has established them in His people.
To them He spoke in the pillar of cloud. They did His will
and kept the law which He, the Lord, has given.
Let us exalt the Lord our God, bow down before His holy mountain.

Beloved, the Lord has washed our garment like snow.
He makes our countenance shine like that of angels.
Beloved, we ascend from the waters of baptism like angels.
With the power of the Holy Spirit
we enter the wedding feast which will not pass away.
We are clothed with the glory which Adam had lost.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise... to the Door of Mercy..... p.160

Hymn *Madrosho*

The glorious star of light was like John.
It shone where our Lord appeared, showing the way to the simple.
When the Preacher showed the Lord at baptism
he concealed the path from the wolves
to preserve the Lamb from being slain,
in order to lead Him to the day of His death
by which His flock would obtain forgiveness. Blessed is He
who by His death saved those whom He had made His own.

The ointment is given to the sick
that they may obtain from it all benefits,
just as Christ who gives Himself,
that all may obtain victory through Him.
Christ, though He is one, the Beloved Son, has many powers
for He prepares diverse corrections for the good of sinners,
as the ointment that, though it is one, has many properties,
compounded as it is with herbs for the healing of all wounds.

O Lord, the young love You, because You are gentle.
Virgins follow You because You are Holy.
Assemblies of people, make your lamps to shine, that impurities
may be cleansed and you may become pure for His coming
as you have been cleansed by the water,
that you may enter the wedding feast of light.

He prepared a banquet for us though He found us unworthy.
The Fair One paid our ransom with His glorious blood
that the guests may not notice our unworthiness and deride us.
The Bridegroom laid down His life as a pledge for us,
He adorned us like a bride with white and purple garments;
He gave us water and His blood to adorn us with it
and with this beauty we keep His love captive for ever.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord be gracious to us,
Son who set us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ who save us by Your Epiphany,
pardon us and our departed.

The Beloved Son of God becomes a Son of man
from a daughter of David to unite our race with Himself.
He mingles with us and clothes us in the garment of Divinity
and by baptism makes us Gods.

The light of our Lord shines forth in the water
and darkness is shattered by the wonder.
He descends into the river and by His light
baptizes those who have been signed for baptism.

He sets fire to the fountain of life.
He mixes the Spirit with the streams of water,
that all who are baptized in them
may become a holy people to Him.

Wonderful is the glorious birth of baptism.
Those who are born of the Daughter of the Light are overjoyed
because they have become the exalted brothers of Christ.
Blessed are they who are born of water and the Spirit.

Glory to You, O Lord, from the penitent,
whom You make to return to Your house.
All honour to the Father who sent You.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels...P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God..... p.6

MEDITATION

Eighth Sunday
After the Epiphany of our Lord[16]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Lord, at Your command the primordial waters were made fertile and produced all kinds of creatures, animals and birds which fly. Grant us then to drink from the waters of the new creation that flow from the river of life at Your baptism. Give us wings of the spirit that we may fly and meet You when You come and sing hymns of praise to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 93 (92) The Lord is king, with majesty enrobed...

Response

Greater than the roar of mighty waters,
more glorious than the surgings of the sea,
the Lord is glorious on high.

You who raised up our race by Your baptism
and adorned it with heavenly gifts,
be gracious to all, O God.

You who make us to be born of water and the Spirit
to become Your brothers and children of Your Father,
be gracious to all, O God.

You whom the Father from on high revealed by His voice:
This is My Son, My Beloved,
be gracious to all, O God.

You who are sent by the Father, the Creator of the light,
and illumine the earth and deliver it from untruth,
be gracious to all, O God.

Glory to the Father and thanksgiving to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit honour and adoration. One true God.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us ...P.3

Response

Christ is baptized in the river Jordan.
From heaven the Father and the Spirit bear witness to Him.
The Spirit by His appearance, the Father by His voice:
This is My Son, My Beloved. In Him is all My delight.

John cries out by the river Jordan:
This is the Life-giving Lamb of God.
And for the crowd pointing at Him with his finger he says:
It is He who takes away the sin of the world and saves it.

Christ comes from the heights and is manifested to us.
He is baptized in the river Jordan by John, His preacher.
The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove rests on His head
and the Father cries out: This is My Beloved.

Church of true believers sing praise to the heavenly Bridegroom
who betrothed you in the river. In the assemblies of your people,
sing praise for His humility, He who sanctifies all
when He is baptized with the sinners.

At the baptism of the Son of God in the river Jordan
John contemplates the mystery of the Trinity:
the Son as He is baptized, the Spirit who descends on Him
and the Father who cries out: This is My Son, My Beloved.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord ... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise... to the One Eternal Godhead...P. 177

Hymn

With the eye of prophecy David saw Christ.
When He came to the river to be baptized in it.
He sounded his harp and sang: The waters saw You, O God,
the waters saw You, my Lord, and they trembled,
the depths of the abyss were stirred and dismayed,
the clouds dropped dew, the heavens thundered.
Glory to Your humility.

By Your Epiphany, Lord, the whole creation is saved
the world that had fallen away from You finds life.
By Your baptism all the peoples are forgiven,
as they confess Your holy name, Jesus our Saviour.
Blessed is Your Epiphany for our salvation
and blessed is Your baptism for the pardon of our sins.
Blessed is Your Father, the Lover of humankind, who sent You to us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

John saw the Son and he cried out and said:
This is the Lamb of God on whom the Father's favour rests.
He saw the heaven open and the Holy Spirit
in the form of a dove resting upon His head.
And the Fiery Ones cried out: Holy! Holy are You,
Son of the Most High who lowered Yourself
and clothed Yourself with a body to give life to the mortals.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Among the children of women, none has risen like John
who saw the Trinity by the river Jordan.
He baptized the Son of Life and saw the Spirit
and heard the voice of Him who said:
This is My Son, My Beloved.
Blessed is the Father who sent His Uniquely Beloved Son.
Blessed is the Son who sanctified us by His baptism.
Praise to the Holy Spirit who forgives us our sins
and be gracious to us.

O Lord, remember the dead and grant them repose
who put You on in baptism
and received You at the altar,
who ate Your body and drank Your blood,
the chalice of salvation.
May they rejoice with Abraham in the kingdom
and may they stand at Your right hand and sing:
Glory to You, Lord, halleluia, grant repose to Your servants.

Prayer of Incense

Fair Dawn which dawned from the Father, the Creator of the light
and brought light to those who were living in darkness,
receive from us sinners this fragrant incense
which we make to ascend before You.

In Your love for humankind,
make to shine upon us the light of Your countenance,
and hallow us by the grace of Your baptism,
Christ our God and our Saviour.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son, who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth
grant her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace, who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity,
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

The prophets and the just were waiting for You O Son of God.
They longed to see the day of Your great manifestation.
They all knew that You would come to be food and drink,
and desired eagerly their revelations to be fulfilled by You.

Son of God, You were expected to come to the earth, and the prophets
were looking for You whose manifestation they had announced,
a secret preserved through all generations.
But while they were longing eagerly for You
they fell asleep in their own time.

All the just who looked with the eye of the Spirit fell asleep.
They looked to see Your day, as it had been announced.

All, prophets, kings and just men yearned for You.
And when You came You gladdened them,
fulfilling the desire of their hearts.

Glory to the Father who inspired the prophecies of the Epiphany.
Adoration to the Son who came and fulfilled the prophecies.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who revealed their truth.
Trinity exalted above all, to You the praise.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The right hand of the Lord does mighty deeds,
the right hand of the Lord has raised me up.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
We are called not to die but to live
and to proclaim the wondrous deeds of the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 20:9-19 Parable of the Wicked Tenants.

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

As on the First Sunday after the Epiphany P. 155

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father..... P.1

Trisagion Holy!Holy! Holy! Lord..... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.... P.7

Response
With those from on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we offer thanksgiving to You and we praise You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

At the baptism of the Son the heavens and the earth rejoice,
singing praise to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

The Holy Spirit in the bodily form of a dove descends and rests on Him,
and the Father cries out: This is My Son, My Beloved.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

Let us offer thanksgiving and adoration
to the great light appearing to us in the river Jordan.
By its appearance it dispels the gloom of untruth
and from the waters of baptism, it clothes us in the garment of divinity.

It is good to offer praise and glory,
adoration and the highest honour
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one true God, to Him be glory.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 100 (99) Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth...

Response
Go within His gates, giving thanks.
Enter His courts with songs of praise.
Give thanks to Him and bless His name.

He who is praised in the highest heaven by the spiritual ones,
with the Father and the Holy Spirit
is revealed in the river Jordan by a double testimony,
the voice of the Father and the descent of the Holy Spirit.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

As on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise.... to the Eternal Being who is the light.... p.170

Hymn

Lord, our Lord, when John the Elect baptized You
the heights and the depths marvelled. The heavens opened
and from on high the Father cried out to the depths:
This is My Son, My Beloved.
And the Holy Spirit flew down from the highest heaven
in the form of a dove and rested upon Your head.

Lord, our Lord, as John was baptizing in the land of Judah,
he declared: After me comes He whose feet I am not worthy to touch,
even to untie the straps of His sandals.
He will give you the baptism with fire, with water and the Spirit,
for He is the Lamb of God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Lord, our Lord, I entered the Holy Church
and I was filled with wonder at what I saw:
the stream of water, the ointment and sweet chrism,
and the priest standing making the sign of the Cross
over all those who are baptized
in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
and they become God's dwelling.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Today the heights and the depths rejoice
and all raise their voice in praise of Him who in His love
became a son of man and lowered Himself
and descended and was baptized in the river Jordan.
From His side He made to flow waters
which are for us the fountain of life,
full of light and provision for the Kingdom.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...p.8

Psalm 101 (100) My song is of mercy and justice...

Response

We will sing of loyalty and justice,
we will sing to You, O Lord,
we will walk in the way of perfection
whatever may befall us. We will go about
spreading the kingdom of justice and love.

Praise to Him who was pleased to be baptized by His servant
in the water of the river Jordan.
The sea saw it and trembled at the brightness of the Divinity.
And the people cried out and said:
Praise Him and exalt Him for ever.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord....
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

As on the Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Praise.... to the Unsearchable God.... p.172

Hymn

Christ came to the son of the barren and bowed His head
before His servant, to be baptized by him. O the great marvel!
The legions of the Fiery Ones stirred and were bewildered
when they saw him, the son of the dust,
laying his hand upon the head of his Lord.
Suddenly the heavens opened and from on high
the Father cried out: This is My Son, My Beloved.

In January, the month of the victory of light,
the Joy-giving Light appears to us from the Virgin's womb
brighter than the sun and brighter than John, son of the barren.
He wills to be baptized like a guilty man,
to make atonement for our sins and remit our debts.
He turns to John saying: Take heart, son of the dust.
Come near, place your hand upon My head to baptize Me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

O Son of the King, what prompts You to seek baptism,
like an offender and from Your servant? John replied to his Lord.
How can he who is but chaff put his hand on the Flame?
If I come near You, O Lord, I will be consumed.
Our Lord replied: Simply lay your hand upon My head.
I will immerse Myself. Halleluia.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

On high the Spirit stirred and descended in the bodily form of a dove
He came and suddenly rested over His head.
Today in the river Jordan the invisible Trinity
is manifested in the baptism of the Son.
Blessed be the Christ who by His baptism sanctifies all waters
for the forgiveness of sins, halleluia, for us all sinners.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.....P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
Son who set us free by Your Epiphany.

Christ who save us by Your Epiphany,
be gracious to us and to the whole world.

He descended on earth in the form of a servant
to make us freeborn, we who were unworthy servants.
He humbled Himself to exalt our lowliness.

The Daughter of the King sings praise to the Beloved Son,
who purifies her with the glorious birth of baptism,
and puts an end to all other offerings and sacrifices.

Behold! The children of the Spirit come out of the water
and fill the womb of the woman who was desolate,
and by this second birth she is being renewed.

Among the children born out of marriage, one only is the firstborn,
but among the children born out of virginity,
the firstborn is not alone, all are firstborn.

Wonderful and glorious is the birth of baptism.
The firstborn of the Daughter of the Light are delighted,
because they have become the exalted brothers of Christ.
Blessed are they who are born of water and the Spirit.

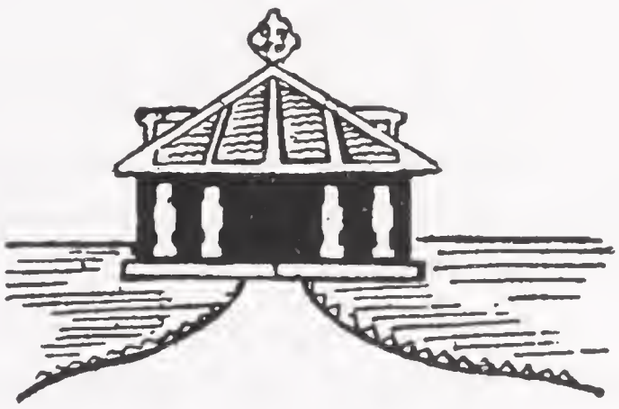
Praise and glory to You, Lord, from the penitent
whom You made to return to Your fold.
Honour to the Father who sent You.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels....P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION



NOVEMBER 21

Entrance of Mary into the Temple[17]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father.... P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord God, that with minds shining with purity and earnestness... and hearts burning with the love of heavenly things and reverence for God, we may enter within the holy temple and worship You in spirit with Blessed Mary who, this day, when she was a child, entered the temple of Your Father and dedicated herself to You. Like her may we also offer our lives to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 132 (131) O Lord, remember David...

Response

O Lord, remember David,
remember his vow to the Most High,
I will not enter the house where I live...
until I find a sanctuary for my Lord,
a dwelling for the Most High.

As the Ark of the Covenant of God's love
was taken to the temple of the Most High,
Mary entered the temple of the Lord God,
to offer herself in true worship
to the Lord who desired her for His dwelling.

Blessed Mother, Virgin full of all beauty, Mary Mother of God,
we ask and beseech the Beloved Son who came forth from you,
to save us and all peoples from being crushed

by the trials and sufferings brought on us by the Enemy.
We cry out to Him, as befitting the Divinity:
You are blessed Lord, the Strong, God of our fathers.

Who is able to speak rightly and fittingly
of Your exalted conception from the word,
O Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God?
You brought forth without pain the Word,
the Well-beloved who is begotten from the Father.
Pray and beseech Him at all times for our race,
to deliver us, earthly ones, from all temptations.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

O Mary, you are wholly admirable,
all holy in your being,
noble in your thoughts,
your story is great before the Lord.

Daughter of David, daughter of Abraham,
chosen from the beginning,
offer prayers and supplications to your Beloved Son
that He may be gracious to all.

Virgin who became the source,
since life originates from you,
ask and obtain from your Beloved Son
that He may be gracious to all.

Offer supplications for all,
you the glory of the believers,
that the Beloved Son who manifested Himself from you
may be gracious to all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.. to the Eternal Light which shone forth from the Eternal Light, and sprang forth from a virgin womb, the womb of His Mother,

as the hope of life. To Him who magnifies and honours the memory of His Mother in heaven and on earth belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Who can be found to tell of your high and heavenly beauty, virgin pure and undefiled, who made God to appear when He took flesh in your pure and virgin womb? Or who would not be struck with wonder, while with Jacob the Patriarch he should say: How awe inspiring is this place! This is no other than the gate of heaven! Gabriel himself, the head of the heavenly companies, greeted you as full of grace. And among the faithful redeemed, O Virgin Mother of God, your renown is equally high, for you are the cause of universal salvation. You are in truth the Mother of the Life-giving Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. At the beginning, the earthly Adam by means of a rib, entrusted this world to Eve for the propagation of our race. But at the end of time, Mother Mary, you brought forth in the flesh the Heavenly Adam in purity and without the pangs of childbirth, for the sake of our salvation, the new and spiritual generation.

Therefore we beseech you, O full of grace, as you have freedom of speech before Emmanuel, born from you, ask for us that we may truly be born again through His living and eternal word. As flesh can give birth only to flesh, while it is the Spirit that gives birth to the spirit, obtain for the Church, your Son's bride, those gifts and charisms of the Holy Spirit, which are her bridal garment. And for us who are gathered here in His presence to honour your Entrance into the Temple, may we be worthy always to offer worship in spirit and in truth, to Him by whose coming truth came into this world. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to Him and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

When the One Beloved Son of God, the Word of the Father,
willed to come down to save our race, He chose His Mother,
still in the womb and made her into a glorious dwelling for His Majesty.
He poured His Spirit into her and filled her with His grace.
He purified her from the passions of the flesh and made her to dwell
in the house of His mysteries that she might grow by them.

Today the just and noble Joachim and Hannah his life companion
fulfil their vow to the Lord, to offer her for His service
the fruit of grace which the Lord El Shaddai was pleased to give them,
an offering and a sacrifice to the God of all creatures,
that through this oblation He might hear the petitions
and graciously receive the requests of His servants.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Virgin Mary was chosen from the beginning
to be the exalted Mother of the Word of God.
Her noble body was kept in all purity and holiness,
and her soul free from all stain,
that she might offer pure worship.
And the power of the Most High rested in her womb.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Mary, you are the true ark of the covenant.
This held the pot of manna and the tablets of the Law.
You are the staff of Aaron, the glorious priest,
which budded mysteriously and bore young shoots.
Your Son is that heavenly bread that comes from heaven,
the fruit which the dead eat and they obtain life by it.

The sound of the trumpet thunders and the foundations of the world
are shaken while the heaven above is rolled up like a scroll.
All the lights set in it fade like flowers.
The Son of God cries out within Sheol and overthrows it.
He raises the dead who were laid there from the beginning.
He breathes in them the breath of the resurrection
and Death has no more power over them for ever.

Prayer of Incense

Pure Incense by whom all heavenly and spiritual beings are perfumed
and which all creatures and things are made to breathe,
Odour of Life and Breath of Purity, we beg of You, Lord God,
and we beseech Your graciousness, that You will accept from us,

Your sinful servants, this fragrant incense which we offer to You
on this day of the glorious and holy commemoration of Mary,
Your Blessed Mother.

We pray that through her You will bestow on us
all abundance of blessings with the pardon of faults
and transgressions committed by us, poor sinners.
Grant us, by her prayers, continual peace and unbroken tranquillity,
that we may offer You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit
praise and thanksgiving without ceasing.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Lord, be gracious to us,
by the prayer of Mary who bore You.

By the prayer of her who loved You so much,
be gracious to us and to the whole world.

Come, you wise men, marvel
at the Virgin Mother, the Daughter of David,
the Fair One who bore the Wonder,
the Fountain that gave us the source of life.

Come, marvel at the Pure One,
wholly admirable in her own self,
the only one in the whole creation
to have given birth without having known man.

Young Dove, you bore the Son
and became the dwelling of the Ancient of Days.
Gentle Dove, of all the songs of birds
yours is the most beautiful.

Glory to You, Son of God,
who descended for the salvation of the creation.
All honour to the Father who sent You,
and to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
He swept the skies aside as He descended.
Thick darkness lay under His feet.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
I was fashioned in times long past,
at the beginning, long before earth itself.
The Lord descended to make His dwelling on earth.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 1:41-49 Mary's song of thanksgiving.

Intercessions

Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer with gladness, exultation and great rejoicing of the heart: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who when You willed to dwell with us on earth chose Mary to be Your Mother and made her to dedicate her life in the temple to Your worship, teach Your Churches always to glorify God and praise Him, that we may be true worshippers, offering to the Father worship in Spirit and in truth, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who took flesh from her who offered herself to You as the Lord's servant, and who here on earth were known Yourself as the servant of God, impress on Your Churches that they are called not to lord it over Your people but, like You, to serve them, to be servant Churches, servants of the poor, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N.... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N.... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all people, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Christ our God, who willed that today Your Mother whom You made the temple of the Holy Spirit would enter into the temple at Jerusalem to dedicate herself to Your Father in a life of pure worship, grant us to offer the whole universe to Him in a sacrifice of praise, and to be counted worthy to share in the worship of the heavenly court, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord.... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.... P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P. 7

Response

O Wakeful One who do not sleep, awaken us to repentance.

By night with the Wakeful Ones let us offer thanks, adoration and praise.

Holy Virgin, may your prayer always be with us.

Mother of God, may your prayer always be with us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 24 (23) The Lord's is the earth and its fulness....

Response

Who will go up the mountain of the Lord?
Who will dwell in His holy place?
She who is all holy and whose heart is pure.

Today Mary enters the temple of God,
her heart yearning for the court of the Lord.
O gates, lift up your heads, higher up, ancient doors!

O Mary, Holy Virgin, Mother of God,
beseech your Well-beloved Son
to make His peace dwell in the whole creation.

Behold, the Wakeful Ones and the angels rejoice
on the day of the remembrance of the Virgin Mary
who brought forth the Son of God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Great One who became little and magnified the lowliness of the Virgin Mary, His Mother. Thanksgiving to the God who became man to redeem the children of men, the Exalted One who humbled Himself to set the humble on high. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

With festive praises of the Holy Spirit we sing to the Blessed Virgin Mary. With blessed Joel the prophet we say: Fear not, O Land, be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things. Truly Mary is that land on which the thorn of sin has never grown, the land which bore Him who has torn up sin by the root, the land which, without being sown, has yielded the fruit which nourishes everything that exists. Rejoice, full of grace who today entered into the temple of the Most High to worship before Him, and to live in the holy presence, you who bore in your womb the Word of God made flesh when He came to make His dwelling among us, living shrine of the divine presence on earth.

Therefore, O Word Most High who were pleased during Your ministry to listen to the requests of Your Mother, on this day of her Entrance into the Temple of God, bestow on us the right understanding of the worship in spirit and in truth, with all its blessings. In Your incarnation You revealed Yourself as the temple which no power on earth could destroy, the spiritual temple from which living waters flow unceasingly on the dry earth of this world. For all this we offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Joachim and Hannah were upright and devout,
faithfully observing all the commandments of the Lord.
But they had no child, for Hannah was barren,
and both were well advanced in years.

Both of them poured out ardent prayers before the Lord:
Give us offspring and it will be Yours,
we will dedicate the child to You for her whole life.
And they went on praying before the Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Blessed is the Lord who was pleased with their manner of life,
He heard their prayer and gladdened them with the child,
Mary, chosen from the beginning to be the Mother of God,
born in purity, all holy, free from all stain.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

As Mary grew up in grace and wisdom, still a child,
she was offered in the temple for the worship of the Lord.
Glory to Him who chose her from all generations,
and made her His dwelling place on earth.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P. 8

Psalm 84(83) How lovely is Your dwelling place...

Response

How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord,
sang Mary when she entered into the temple,
my heart had been longing and yearning,
pining for the courts of the Lord's temple.
Now my whole being cries out with joy:
They are happy, who dwell in Your house,
never ceasing to sing Your praise.

Holy! Holy! Holy is the Lord.
The Fiery Ones hallow with their wings
Him whom the Holy Virgin contained.

To Him whom the Winged Creatures bless with their wings
the blessed among all women gave birth.
Him whom the angels serve with trembling
she carried in the creation, in the house of the earthly ones.
O Mother of God, to you our praise in the creation.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Everlasting Light which shone forth from the Everlasting Light, and sprang forth as the hope of life from the womb of His Mother and sucked her virgin breast. To Him who has magnified the memory of His Mother in heaven and on earth belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ our God, Word of the Father, who humbled Yourself for our salvation when by the power of the Spirit You took flesh in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and endured the contempt of men, we praise You on the day of the Entrance of Your Mother into the Temple. In regard to her mission and her association with You she was signified beforehand by the prophets. One of them by the bush which was on fire and was not burnt made her known as the Virgin Mother from whom the Word of God comes to us. Another by the city on the holy mountain, so cherished by the Lord, and in whom all peoples find their home, truly revealed her universal motherhood.

Therefore we entrust our prayers and petitions to her hands so that they may be mingled with her prayers and, through her, find their way to You. Like her may we commit our lives to You as when she said: Let it be done according to Your word. And like her also may we never cease pondering over Your Holy Mysteries in our hearts, that we may always offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Blessed are you, Mary, whom God chose from childhood
and now He magnifies your memory.
You grew in His house near the altar fed with the offerings.

The priests treated you with reverence.
The angel sought from you a greeting of peace
and God descended and dwelt in you.

Blessed are you, Mary,
who by your virginity were a pearl without flaw.
He who rules the kings saw your virtuous life
and He sent His Son who descended
and dwelt in your womb and took flesh from you
to save Adam and his progeny from their enslavement to sin.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Moses on the mountain saw a marvel,
fire in the bush and the bush was not consumed.
This was an image of the Life-giving Son
who is fire and dwelt in the womb of Mary.
Glory to the Good One who came and fulfilled
what the prophets, in the Spirit, had spoken of in parables.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Mary carried Him who carries all.
She heard Elizabeth, from her own lips, saying:
Blessed are you who were found worthy to become His Mother.
O Son of the King, Offspring of the Father,
of Your own will You descended
and clothed Yourself in a body to raise our mortal race.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give, rest, Lord.... P. 9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.... P. 13

Supplication Song Lord be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O blessed one,
may your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayers and be gracious to us.

You who are full of graciousness,
pray and beseech Him who is all graciousness
to be gracious to all who are in distress.

Christ the Giver of Life to the world becomes man,
from the lineage of just people and from the tribe of Judah.
With Mary the Law ceases and Prophecy comes to an end,
as the figures depicted by the seers in the Spirit are fulfilled.

Hannah the devout woman offers praise to the Lord:
He has designed to take away my reproach among people.
Today she raises her voice in exultation:
This is the Lord's doing who visited us in His mercy.

Glory to the Word of God who willed to become man,
and chose His Mother from the seed of good people.
He took flesh from her in purity without change or confusion.
He came forth from her and by His grace saved us from the Captor.

You who are full of graciousness,
pray and beseech Him who is all graciousness
to be gracious to all who are in distress.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

Ferial Days in the Season of the Annunciation[18]

These Services are celebrated on ferial days of this season, beginning from the Monday following the Sunday of the Annunciation to Mary, till the twenty third of December.

MONDAYS IN THE SEASON OF THE ANNUNCIATION
EVENING PRAYER

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P. 3

Doxology Glory be to the Father ...P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God, to praise You with the Fiery One who brought the message of Your coming to the Daughter of David, to be filled with the Holy Spirit like Elizabeth when Mary greeted her, to rejoice with John the Forerunner when You visited him still in the womb of his mother, and to marvel greatly at You, like Joseph the Just when he was made to know the mystery of Mary's conception, that we may always offer highest exaltation to You, and to Your Glorious Father who begot You and to Your Hidden and All-hallowing Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 40 (39) I waited, I waited for the Lord...

Response

How many, our Lord, are the wondrous deeds
that You made for us!
How wonderful the designs You have for us!
They are more than we can tell.

All honour and glory, adoration and exaltation,
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one true God. To Him all praise.
And on us His love, for ever and ever.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us ... p. 3

Response

We call to You, Lord, hasten to help us.
Hear our voice when we cry to You.
Let our prayer arise before You like incense,
the lifting up of our hands like the evening sacrifice.

We have sinned against heaven and in Your sight, O God,
and we are not worthy to be called Your children.
Take us as hired servants because we have sinned,
but let us be servants in Your house.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Eternal Word and Well-beloved Son of the Father who at the announcement of Gabriel the Archangel came to dwell in the Virgin, the Daughter of David, and took flesh in her that He might blot out the sins of the race of Adam. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

Praise and thanksgiving to You who gladdened the Virgin Mary with the message of peace instead of the sentence of exile pronounced against Eve, our first mother. Gabriel cried out to her and said: Peace be with you, full of grace; the Lord is with you, blessed among women. And when by his message of peace he made clear that the ancient hedge of enmity which the Adversary had planted was removed, the creation was filled with joy and endless gladness. We also say: Peace be with you, full of grace, Mother of the Maker of the universe. We stand in awe and wonder and with joy of heart say that the Lord God has revealed His graciousness and redeemed the world.

Therefore we beseech you that you will intercede for us and pray to God who was born from you, that He will give us seasons of joy and years of blessings, and perfect us by the bond of love for Him and for one another. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to Him and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Annunciation to Mary

He lowered the heaven and descended.

The angel descended from on high
to deliver his message to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
He appeared before her and said:
Peace be with you, the Lord is with you;
God's blessing is on you above all women, halleluia,
the Lord will come forth from you.

Mary marvelled at the wonderful words of the Wakeful One
and she said to him:
How can this be as I never knew a man?
How can I bear a child?
Reveal it to me and explain, O Fiery One,
halleluia, do not keep it back from me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Wakeful One answered to the Blessed Virgin Mary:
The Holy Spirit will come,
and the Power of the Most High will descend on you.
From you will come forth the Creator of all creatures,
who is to save the world, halleluia, halleluia.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The Virgin full of grace answered with joy
to the Fiery One and said:
I am the servant of the Lord, as you are His minister.
Let it be to me as you have said, halleluia.
And may His name be blessed.

Prayer of Incense

Because Zechariah the priest
would not believe the angel's word, O God,
You bound his tongue until the birth of his son,
the Preacher of Truth, whom You sent as the forerunner
to clear the way for the coming of Your Son.

By the fragrance of this incense, be pleased
and grant that whenever our faith is tested by trials,
we may not fail to spread the good odour of Your Kingdom,
the fragrance that brings life, like Your Son's coming in the flesh.

For the Annunciation to Zechariah

Gabriel received the command
and straightway flew and descended.
He entered into the sanctuary beside Zechariah
and announced to him that he would have a son.

All the saints and the just of old,
awaited the day of the Son of the King.
Today He is sent from His Father to the world,
as a delightful spring to quench our thirst.

For Confidence *Isaiah* 41

You, Jacob My servant, you the people that I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, My friend, fear not, for I am with you.
Be not afraid for I am your God, I give you strength.
I bring you help, I uphold you and save you.

I the Lord your God take you by the right hand.
I say to you, fear not, weak as you are Israel, poor house.
It is I who help you, the Holy One of Israel, your Redeemer.
You shall rejoice in the Lord and glory in His Anointed.

For the Incarnation of the Word of God

Bless the Lord at all times.

Blessed is He who dwelt in the womb of Mary,
yet did not leave His seat on high.
Blessed is He who descended and dwelt in the depths,
yet did not leave the heights.

He lowered the heaven and descended

Gabriel the Archangel announced to Mary:
Peace be with you, O full of grace;
the Lord is with you,
and will appear from you.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to the Mighty and Hidden One
who did not leave His Father,
yet descended and dwelt in the womb of Mary,
and came forth from her to save us.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

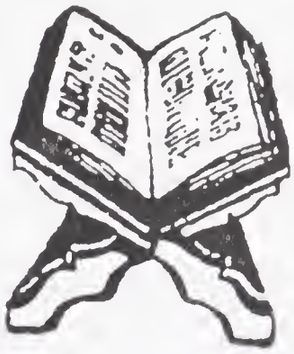
O Virgin who bore and carried
in your womb the Life-giving Lamb of God,
beseech Him and make supplication
that He may have mercy on all.

The two worlds belong to You, O Lord,
Your power extends both here and there.
Keep the living by Your Cross
and in Your graciousness pardon the departed.

A SERVICE OF REPENTANCE FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

As in the weekly celebration of the Economy of Salvation on Mondays. Vol. I P. 48

The references to the pages of Vol. I refer to its third revised edition of 1996



Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.....P. 1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P. 1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P.7

Response
With those from on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we sing praise to You and we bless You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

With the Winged Creatures we bless You.
With the Fiery Ones we hallow Your name, O Lover of humankind.
With the angels we bow to You in adoration.
To You be glory, Creator of all creatures.

The angel descended from the ranks of fire.
And giving the greeting of peace to the Holy Virgin,
the Daughter of the Hebrews, he said:
From you shall come forth the Saviour of the whole creation.

The blessed one answered to the angel,
How will this be?
I am a virgin and no man has known me.
How is it possible that what you say will happen to me?

Glory, honour, adoration and the highest exaltation,
it is good to offer to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one true God, to Him be praise.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 101 (100) My song is of mercy and justice....

Response

We sing a psalm to You, O Lord,
a song of loyalty and love.
We will follow the path of integrity.
O Lord, do not delay, come to us.

At Your door, O Compassionate One,
all those who are afflicted knock,
begging from You healing for the hidden ills of their souls.
Help us and show us Your love.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Holy One who made holy her who bore Him, the Virgin who was His Mother. To the Exalted One who looked upon the lowliness of His handmaid and made her the bridal chamber of His Majesty. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We make memory... of the Holy Virgin Mother whom Ezekiel in his prophecy called the closed door which was not to be opened until the Lord God should enter by it. He who is true God, equal to His Father in the height of His Godhead, and equal to His Mother in the lowliness of His humanity. Therefore we will praise and exalt and honour her who is higher than all the ranks of angels, in that she was the Mother of their Lord and gave to suck milk from her breast to her Creator. And according to her prophecy we say to her: Blessed are you above all those who were redeemed by your Son.

And while we exalt with the voice of praise the Son who came forth from you, we beg that by your prayers our offences may be pardoned, and the departed believers may be given rest in heaven. And with them we will offer praise to Christ our Lord who came forth from you and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Annunciation to Mary

He lowered the heaven and descended.

The angel Gabriel, the messenger, flew and descended swiftly,
to the Virgin Mary and said: Peace to you, blessed among women,
from you shall come forth the Saviour of all creatures.

The Virgin replied with joy: As you have announced,
let it be done to me to be the Mother of God.
And she gave thanks for His grace.

He flew on the wings of the wind.

The angel Gabriel was a messenger.
He received a letter from his Lord and brought it to Mary
and said to her: Peace be with you, O Daughter of David,
Virgin full of grace, our Lord is well pleased with you.
You will have a wondrous conception, without seed or marriage.
O Virgin, your conception shall be by the Holy Spirit.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

When the archangel Gabriel descended
to announce the noble conception to the Virgin Mary,
and saw her, he bowed to her and said:
Peace to you, Virgin full of grace and Mother blessed.
You will have a wonderful conception. He will take flesh
in your womb, in purity, the God of gods, the Saviour of the world.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Peace to you, full of grace, second heaven, said the angel.
In you dwells the Lord of the creation. Peace to you,
palace which is to contain Him who rules all rulers.
The Pure and Holy One dwells and exults in your palace.
Trembling with joy the Virgin reverently replied to the Fiery One:
Let it be done to me as you said. And she gave thanks for His grace.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P. 7

Psalm 105 (104): 1-15 Give thanks to the Lord....

Response
O sing to the Lord, sing His praise;
tell all His wonderful works!

Be proud of His holy name....
He, the Lord, is our God:
His judgements prevail in all the earth.

O Judge who judge righteously,
before whom all hidden things are revealed,
do not condemn us on the day of Your judgement,
when all things are brought into the light.
You are blessed, Lord our God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the One Holy Father who dwells in those who love Him. To the One adorable Son who abides in the bones of His saints. To the One Holy Spirit who weaves crowns of glory for His athletes. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil.....

When we desire to offer our praises to the prophets and apostles, the martyrs and confessors and doctors of orthodox faith, and to exalt them with songs of the Holy Spirit, we are not able to praise them as is right and fitting. But since they have been made advocates and intercessors for us and have been given authority over the treasury of their Lord, we offer our prayers to them that they may ask for us from their Lord, pardon of offences and forgiveness of sins, and rest and a good remembrance of the departed believers. And we will offer praise to the Father who crowns them, to the Adorable Son who honours them, and to the Holy Spirit who perfects and consummates their conflicts, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Annunciation to Zechariah

He sent the Fiery One

The angel descended full of joy
and announced to Zechariah, the priest:
The Preacher of Truth will be born to you,
from the womb of the daughter of the Levites,
and you shall call him John.

He saw a fearful vision.

Zechariah looked at the Fiery One

and was amazed at what he said.
He was filled with awe at the sight of the Wakeful One.
He doubted his words and did not see how they could come true.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Zechariah, the priest, received the Wakeful One's sentence
that he would remain dumb
until the day of the birth of John,
because he did not believe his words.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory to the Son of God who gave fruit to the barren womb,
and sent him ahead of Himself
to prepare a path for the peoples and tribes,
that they might find their way to the source of life.

Hymn *Madrosho*

The Lord gave order to Gabriel
to descend and to announce to the pure one:
Behold, a babe, the Elder of all generations,
is descending to dwell in your womb,
and by His birth from you all generations will be saved.

The Virgin understood the angel's words
and she asked: How will this happen
as I have never known a man?
The angel replied: O Virgin,
your conception will be from the Holy Spirit.

The daughter of David rose in praise,
when she received the message from the Wakeful One,
that she was found worthy to be the mother of the Word,
the Uniquely Beloved Son of God,
who willed to become man to save the race of Adam.

He for whom the heaven is too small,
who holds the sea and the earth in His hand,
was held in the virgin's womb for the sake of earthly Adam.
Praise to Him who out of love
came to save the creation.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens....P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Father who sent Gabriel to make the announcement to Mary,
give peace and tranquillity to Your Churches,
and protect their people against all harm and evil.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity,
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

As Mary listened to the words of the Wakeful One she marvelled.
The news that entered by the ear greatly disturbed her mind.
Lord, I am a virgin, how can you speak of conception?
I cannot think of marriage, I wish to remain in virginity.

Who will seek grapes from the vine without ploughing?
Who will expect fruit from the earth without sowing?
And conception from a virgin without marriage?
Please reveal this. It remains hidden from me.

The angel listened with attention to the words of the Virgin
and like a learned scribe explained how it would happen:
The Holy Spirit will come upon you in holiness,
and the power from on high will rest on you lovingly.

Glory to the Father, cause and source of all good things.
Adoration to the Son from whom flow all blessings.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who perfects all joys Blessed is He.
Who is the fountain from where flows life for the children of men.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Tuesdays in the Season of the Annunciation

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P. 3

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P. 1

Opening Prayer Make us worthy, Lord... P. 255

Psalm 113 (112) Praise, O servants of the Lord...

Response

Who is like the Lord, our God, who has His throne on high,
yet looks down from heaven upon the earth?
He raises the lowly from the dust to sit them with the princes
and makes the childless woman a happy mother of children.

May our praise ascend to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
the Mystery of the Holy Trinity.
To Him be praise from the whole creation.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

Set a guard, O Lord, over our mouths,
keep watch at the door of our lips.
Let not our hearts be inclined to evil things,
or rejoice in deeds of wickedness.

Incline Your ear in mercy, O Lord,
answer and hear the voice of our prayer.
In Your loving kindness, be pleased
to receive our service and our prayers.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise.....

Praise... to the Great One who in His compassion gave command to the narrow confines of the womb and it was able to contain Him. Praise to the Strong One who in His tender love strengthened the weakness of the lap which carried Him, as He willed. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

God the Father, when You willed to reveal Your graciousness to Your creation You sent Gabriel the Archangel, to obtain the consent of the Virgin Mary to the divine conception of the Eternal Child who is before all creatures. When the Fiery One descended he greeted the Virgin: Peace be with you, full of grace. Our Lord is with you, blessed among women. Therefore we also today while we commemorate the announcement to her who was full of grace, with the Archangel cry out and say: Peace be with you, mother of the Lord of creation, temple in which dwelt God, the Strong One of the ages. Peace be with you, joy of those in heaven and those on earth.

Therefore, we beseech you that while raising our eyes to you who shine forth as a model of sanctity, and devotedly meditating on you, and contemplating you in the figures and symbols of the prophets and in the pure light of the Gospel of the Word of God made flesh, we may become ever increasingly like you and like your Son, we who are called to share in the very being of God. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Annunciation to Mary

God sent His grace.

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy,
Gabriel the Archangel was sent to Mary,
the pure Virgin, in the town of Nazareth,
to deliver to her God's announcement.

He speaks to you words of peace.

Peace to you, pure and holy one.
It has pleased the Father to send His Son,

and the Son wills to come forth from your purity
to save the world and set it free from evil.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Praise to You, and to Him who sent You,
Son of the Hidden and Exalted One,
who descended of Your own will,
and dwelt in the Virgin Mary.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

O Lord of all, by the prayers of Your Mother,
the Holy Virgin who bore You,
protect us in body, soul and spirit,
from all harm or injury.

Prayer of Incense

O Mary, you are a fair lily
whose fragrance has spread all over the world,
and whose ravishing beauty
has led captive all generations of believers.

Pray to your Son who came forth from your womb,
and offered Himself on our behalf,
as a fragrant sacrifice well pleasing to God,
that we may always receive His word like you,
pondering over it in our hearts and keeping it with faith.

Mary God's Bride *Isaiah 62*

About Jerusalem I will not be silent
until her integrity shines out like the dawn.
The nations will see your glory.
You will be a crown of splendour in the Lord's hand,
a kingly diadem in the hand of your God.

No longer shall men call you "Forsaken,"
You shall be called, "My Delight",

for the Lord delights in you.
Like a young man marrying a virgin,
so will the One who created you marry you.
He rejoices in you as the bridegroom rejoices in his bride.

For the Coming of the Lord *Zechariah 2:10*

Sing, rejoice, Daughter of Jerusalem,
for I am coming to dwell among you.
Many nations shall come over to the Lord
and they will become His people.

But the Lord will hold Judah as His portion
and make Jerusalem the city of His choice.
Let all humankind be silent in the presence of the Lord,
for He is awaking and is coming from His holy dwelling.

Mary's Praise

God sent His grace.

The truthful Lord sent to Blessed Mary
a truthful messenger,
who truthfully sowed peace in her ears
when he said to her: The Lord is with you!

God spoke out of His Holiness.

Isaiah the son of Amos announced in his prophecies
that a virgin would conceive a son of wonder.
The Mighty One who carries the world
is hidden in dark sayings of His own will.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Rock which was in the wilderness,
giving water to the thirsty, a marvel never seen,
is like Mary who, from the peace within, brings forth for us
the life-giving spring that makes whole the waters of death.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Christ, Radiance which does not fade, who out of love
put on humility and dwelt in the womb of the Virgin,
while the seal of virginity was not broken when she conceived
and brought forth! Glorious and exalted is her memory!

In Your saving Gospel You made this promise:
He who believes in Me, dwells in Me and I in him.
Give rest, then, to the dead and raise them to life,
they who ate the Bread of Life and drank the Cup of Immortality.

A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S MERCIES

As in the Weekly Celebration of the Economy of Salvation on Tuesdays,
Vol. 1, P.76

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord...P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

Awaken us to sing with the Wakeful ones fitting praises
to You the Wakeful One who does not sleep,
with the Wakeful Ones and the angels who minister to You.

Long ago, before many generations,
the Lord made promises to Abraham and to David
about His Son, Christ, to come forth from Mary.

The Wakeful One descended from the highest heaven.
He brought peace to the Virgin and said to her,
Rejoice, Mary, Daughter of David, Mother of the Christ.

The angel Gabriel, Head of the ranks of all the Fiery Ones
announced and said to you:
The Lord is with you, O full of grace.

To You be glory, O Father, with the Son and the Holy Spirit.
The whole creation offers adoration to You.
And we too sing praise and offer thanksgiving to You.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 108 (107) My heart is ready, O God....

Response

You are exalted above the heavens, O God,
may Your glory shine on earth!

O come and deliver Your friends,
help with Your right hand and reply.

Beloved, let us make supplication with tears, prayer and watching,
for the pardon of offences and all sins of negligence.
Let us praise Him by night and by day.
Let us magnify, exalt and extol His Holy Name for ever.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Everlasting Light and Giver of Life to the creation, to Him who while He did not cease to be Son of His Heavenly Father, descended and dwelt in the pure Virgin, Holy Mary, and visited our race in His mercy and compassion, the Good One to whom belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

What mind or tongue can suffice to praise the Mother of God, Mary... the Virgin Mother who brought forth God who took flesh from her, and through her was paid the debt of Adam. Since she is the Mother of God we will call her blessed, as she prophesied concerning herself and said: All generations shall call me blessed! And we will say: Blessed are you who were the Mother of Him whose burning might the heavens cannot contain. Blessed are you who carried in your arms Him who holds the creation in His hand. Blessed are you who gave milk to Him at whose gesture springs flow.

Therefore we beseech You, Christ our God, by her prayers, look upon us with graciousness. Give health to the sick and relief to the afflicted, hope to the living and rest to the dead. To our weakness grant that we may be changed, that from being impure we may become meek and gentle, always keeping our hearts in purity. And make us worthy to come to a blessed end, that we may offer praise and thanksgiving, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Annunciation to the Mother of God

God sent His word of truth.

The peace of the Father was sent from on high,
through Gabriel to Mary, the gracious one.

The mouth of the Fiery One was full of peace when he gave it.
He said: The Lord is with you and shall come forth from you.

From one end of the earth to the other.

Filled with awe and wonder at the words spoken by Gabriel,
Mary realized that the Mighty One wanted to dwell in her.
She spoke and said: Let it be done to me
to be the Mother of God, as you have said.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Lord, do not resent our ways, do not be angry for our sins.
Give us time and strength to convert to You, Lord,
that we may live by Your grace.
Lord, may Your grace ever abide in us.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Let us be converted and do righteousness at all times.
Death is approaching, let us make provisions for the journey,
that when we stand in judgement, we may seek pardon,
and obtain mercy for not making all our talents fructify.

Hymn *Madrosho*

Blessed is He who sent a messenger to announce His conception to Mary

The angel was sent to announce
the conception of his Lord to a poor virgin,
who though she belonged to the royal family,
found herself in humble circumstances.

At the sight of the angel she took alarm,
as there was no place to seek refuge.
Inside she felt insecure, and she was afraid to go out;
so she did not know what to do.

Seeing that she was perturbed,
Gabriel reassured her about what was happening.

He removed all fear from her heart,
and gave her peace of mind by the Word of life sown in her.

The Son rose and descended and rested in her.
He came as a treasure to enrich a needy one.
And, she who was enriched, also enriched the impowerished world,
by the treasure that dwelt in her womb.

Before the conception she was confused,
but when she accepted it she exulted.
After her trembling when she heard the good tidings,
joy came to her through the Son, the Lord of all,
who lowered His Greatness down to her.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 111 (110) I will thank the Lord...

Response

Great are the works of the Lord,
to be pondered by all who love Him...
He makes us remember His wonders.
The Lord is compassion and love.

Lord of all, in Your graciousness,
grant us to be good and diligent labourers
in Your vineyard, with all the just men
and the righteous ones who loved You.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord..... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise...to God the Word who first walked the way of suffering to slaughter and His disciples followed after Him to death, the Good One, to whom belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

We beseech you, prophets and apostles, martyrs and confessors, towers of truth, planters of true faith, builders of the Holy Church, earthly stars on the path of life, spiritual salt, helpers of the world, be intercessors for us that our sins may be pardoned. By your intercession may the poor be provided for through the sharing of the rich. May the sick be cared for and all in the Church of believers be in peace. May her pastors be preserved in mercy. May her departed be remembered at the heavenly altar. And through Jesus our Lord may we be worthy of Your spiritual teaching, that in your company in the Kingdom, we may offer praise to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

God sent His truth.

The angel descended from the ranks of the flaming ones
to Blessed Mary who was at prayer and he said to her:
Peace be with you, from you shall come forth the Saviour.
How shall this be, replied Mary, for I know not man.
You shall be with child of the Holy Spirit, said the angel,
He shall rest upon you in holiness.

From one end of the earth to the other

The good tidings brought by Gabriel
sowed peace in the creation,
peace in the heights and in the depths.
Life for the mortal ones appeared through Blessed Mary.
Through her the nations turned away from untruth,
and through her also God was reconciled.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

It was not out of place for Mary
to tell the messenger of peace and tranquillity
coming from the presence of his Lord,
what you say:
From you comes the Saviour,
how will that be without marriage?

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The messenger of the King of kings
left his seat of fire and descended
and prepared a temple
for Him who is a live spring by nature.
The Wakeful One left the Virgin,
and ascended to worship Him on high.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia....P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens....P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us, and help us!

Father who sent Gabriel to make the announcement to Mary,
give peace and tranquillity to Your Churches
and protect their people against all harm and evil.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

A revelation was conveyed by God for the pure one,
through the angel Gabriel fully versed in all truths.
The Fiery One left the heavenly ranks
sent from God by a secret sign.

As ordered to him by the Exalted One on high,
on meeting Mary he gave her peace and revealed the mystery.

After bowing to the Virgin Mother of the King,
he spoke to her such beautiful words that his message was accepted.

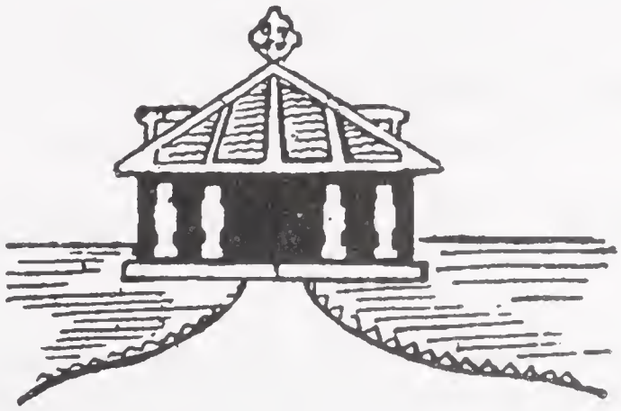
Peace be with you who are filled with the light of God's house.
Peace be with you, Mary, Mother of the Sun of Righteousness.
Peace be with you, receptacle of holy things of wonderful beauty,
harbour of mysteries, ship loaded with Him who is Life Eternal.

Glory to the Father who announced to Mary through the angel.
Adoration to the Son who descended and dwelt in a womb of flesh.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who united Him to the earthly ones.
To Him who is one and three all praise.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ....P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION



Wednesdays in the Season of the Annunciation

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Opening Prayer Make us worthy, Lord... P.255

Psalm 82 (81) God stands in the divine assembly...

Response

Judges have neither knowledge nor understanding,
they grope in the darkness
and the foundations of the world are shaken...
I say to you, you are of God,
all of you, children of the Most High.
Arise, O God, judge the earth, for You rule all nations.

Pardon our sins, O God, forgive all our offences...
We beseech You like the sinful woman.
Like the publican we entreat You,
be compassionate to us, O Lover of Humankind.
Do not remember our failings
and the evil deeds we have done in Your presence.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us....P.3

Response

Your word is a lamp for our steps, a light on our path.
Your will is our heritage for ever, the joy of our hearts.
We have set ourselves to carry out Your commandments,
in fulness for ever.

We beseech You, O Mother of God, that with us and for us,
you may be our intercessor with the King of kings,
that He may make His peace and calm to dwell in the creation,
and in His love, put an end to distress in the whole world.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to Him who is without flesh yet became flesh to give a spiritual birth to those who were born of the desire of the flesh, and to bestow on them the right to become God's offspring, and now honours His Mother in heaven and on earth. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

God the Father of Mercies who willed that the consent of the Virgin of Nazareth should be obtained for the incarnation of Your Son to give to the world the new life that would renew our race, You adorned her with the splendour of a unique holiness, revealed by the angel when he greeted her: O full of grace! while she replied: I am the servant of the Lord, let it be to me as you said. Blessed is she who offered herself in faith at the announcement and sustained her commitment to God without wavering throughout her life, bringing Him forth in poverty, presenting Him in the temple while making the offering of the poor, bringing Him up at Nazareth and accompanying Him and serving Him in His ministry unto the Cross.

With love we venerate her who is worthy of the blessings and praises of all humankind and we offer prayers and supplications that she will obtain for us from her Son mercy and compassion and all spiritual gifts and an abundance of the good things by which is experienced the coming of God's Kingdom. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to Him and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Coming of the Lord *Isaiah* 40:3

He comes to dwell with us.

Prepare a road for the Lord through the wilderness,
clear a highway across the desert for our God...
Every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and rugged places shall be made smooth.

You shall see the glory of the Lord.

Thus the glory of the Lord shall be revealed
and all humankind shall see it,

and they shall find their joy in the Lord.
It is the Lord Himself who speaks.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger,
and shout with a loud voice: Here is your God!
Here is the Lord God coming with power,
coming to establish His Kingdom.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

He will feed His flock like a shepherd
and gather them together with His arms;
He will carry the lambs in His bosom
and make the mother ewes rest along running waters.

Prayer of Incense

We offer praise to You, O Lord, at this evening hour,
in commemoration of the Annunciation to Mary,
whom You chose from among the poor and humble
who confidently awaited Your salvation, to be Your Mother,
that You might free us from sin in the Mystery of Your flesh.

May this incense which is burning in Your presence
be a fragrant offering
and an acceptable sacrifice pleasing to You.
May Your Mother be honoured by it,
and the fragrance of her life always draw us to You.

For the Annunciation to Mary

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult.

On the day You announced to the Virgin Mary
the conception of the Word of God, the Uniquely Beloved Son,
the Wakeful Ones on high marvelled that it pleased You
to become man to save Adam who was immersed in sin.

In words without deceit.

The angel turned to the young maiden and said:
The Lord hidden from all, exalted above all,
sent me to tell you, O Holy Virgin,
that you will conceive by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to the Mighty One who letdown His love from on high
when He descended and dwelt in the womb of the Virgin.
Taking flesh from her He became man of His own will
and by humbling Himself made our salvation.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Virgin Daughter of David in whom dwelt the Lord Most High,
and from whom He came forth to save the creation,
ask and beseech the Son who appeared from you
to make His peace reign in the whole creation.

O King and Giver of Life, when You appear with glory
from on high to raise the dead to life
and resurrect those who lie buried,
the dead will rise together from their graves
and offer praise to the Living One who raises them up.

A SERVICE FOR THE MOTHER OF GOD

As in the Weekly Celebration of the Economy of Salvation on Wednesdays
Vol. 1, P. 103

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

When we rise from sleep, O Lord of all,
to offer praise to Your Godhead,
heaven and earth sing glory to You, O Wakeful One,
who are hidden from the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.

At night, arise, people of the light,
when darkness covers the earth and silence fills the heights.
Awake, our spiritual harps,
and sing praise to God with those on high.

The Wakeful One descended to the Daughter of David.
He bowed before her and said:
Peace to you, blessed among women,
the Lord is with you. The Saviour will come forth from you.

Peace to you, Mary, full of beauty.
From you shall come forth the Saviour of the whole creation.
He will become an infant within your womb,
and the whole creation will rejoice at His birth.

Glory to the Father and adoration to the Son,
and thanksgiving to the Spirit,
glorious Trinity, three persons, three names,
one true God, to Him be praise.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 116:1-9(114) I love the Lord for He has heard...

Response

How gracious is the Lord, and just!
Our God is full of compassion.
The Lord preserves the simple-hearted;
we were brought low and He saved us.

Let our prayer arise before You,
O good and gentle Lord.
Forgive our offences and our sins,
in the abundance of Your loving kindness.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Word of the Eternal Father who dwelt in the womb of the Virgin, and was clothed in flesh from her, and came forth from her womb. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

O Lady Mary, Blessed Virgin Mother of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, blessed are you who brought forth Him before the majesty of whose power the spirits of flame tremble. Blessed are you who gave milk to suck to Him who feeds the whole creation.

Therefore we beg of you, O Mother of Graciousness, that you will intercede with your Son and your God, that He may bestow on us His heavenly help, so that we may keep His commandments and fulfil His will. And may we be worthy to behold you in the Church of the Firstborn in heaven, so that we may praise and exalt and glorify the Holy Trinity without ceasing in that Kingdom which does not end, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Messianic Prefigurations

God spoke out of His holiness.

Come, Moses, tell us what is that bush ablaze with fire
that appeared to you on the top of the Mountain?

It is the Child of the Exalted One
who appeared from the Virgin Mary,
and by His coming enlightens the whole world, halleluia.
To Him be glory from the creation and to His Mother all blessing.

He descended like dew on the fleece.

Come, Gideon, tell us what is the fleece and the gentle dew?
Explain the mystery of this saying.
Mary the Daughter of David is the fleece.
She received the Dew which is the Word of God, halleluia.
He appeared from her in the creation to save the world from untruth.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Come, David, tell us what is that city which you saw
and what is the green plant that sprouted in it?
The city is Mary and the plant is our Saviour, halleluia.
Blessed is He who descended and dwelt in her
and came forth from her and saved us.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Come, Ezekiel, tell us what is that closed door,
which no one could enter except God? Mary is the door
from which our Saviour came to the world, halleluia.
Blessed is He who sealed the virginity of His Mother,
as a door closed from the beginning.

Hymn *Madrosho*

Glory to You, Lord. Glory to You who out of love descended and saved the world.

The angel descended from on high,
and offered praise to the Virgin, who was trembling
when she was told of the breaking of the commandment
and the restoration of peace
for those who had been driven away from heaven.

The daughter of Adam consented for the sake of him,
who had been led astray on account of his wrong listening.
She did away with the foolishness of Adam

who on account of eating the bitter fruit of Eden
was put to shame, as he became aware that he was naked.

Mary the daughter of David rose,
when she was given the greeting of peace by the Wakeful One.
As she turned Adam's deception to good, she clothed him
in a garment of glory which he wore magnificently,
like a bridegroom at his marriage feast.

There were two virgins whose actions were not equal:
One brought about the fall of man,
the other did her Father's will.
By Eve, man went to the grave,
by Mary he was called to heaven.

Two messengers were sent out to the world
Satan and the Angel,
the Serpent and Gabriel, Eve and Mary.
By their respective message
people met with death or with life.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....P.8

Psalm 116:10-19(115) I trusted, even when I said...

Response

How can we repay the Lord
for all His gifts to us?
We will offer the cup of salvation
and invoke the Lord by name.

We are Your servants and the children of Your servant and Mother.
To You we bring our offering of thanksgiving,
and we invoke Your name, O Lord,
for You have undone the bonds that bound us.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to Him who chose the humble Virgin who would become His Mother and now honours her and magnifies her memory in the four quarters of the earth. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

While with festive praises of the Holy Spirit we sing to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, we present our supplication through her to the Child she carried in her womb. Jesus, remove from the earth and its inhabitants all hatred and evil. Comfort Your people, speak tenderly to them. Make them aware of the new creation that comes into existence when they receive Your word in their heart: Every valley shall be filled, every mountain made low. The rugged land shall be made plain, the rough country a broad valley. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all humankind shall see the salvation of God. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Annunciation to Mary

He lowered the heaven and descended.

The angel Gabriel descended from the heavenly ranks to Nazareth
and said to Mary: Peace be with you, O full of grace.
The Lord is with you and will be born from you.
But she said: No man has known me.
Can a virgin become mother without a man?
The Holy Spirit will come to you, said the Wakeful One,
halleluia, by His power you will conceive.

Come, Daniel, tell us, whom did you see on the throne?
Who is the Ancient of Days? The throne of fire and the flame?
It is the Word who descended from the Father to dwell in Mary,
the virgin from whom He was clothed with a body.
He came forth from her at Bethlehem.
And at His birth, shepherds and wise men came to worship.
Halleluia, to Him all glory.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Who has ever seen a virgin giving birth to a lion cub?
A girl carrying the Ancient of Days who carries the creation?
It is Mary, the daughter of Joachim, about whom Ezekiel said:
That door will not be entered by anybody,
except the Word of God, true God of true God.
By night and by day let us praise Him, halleluia, unceasingly.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed are you, Mary, Daughter of David,
who brought forth the Son of God in the flesh.
The Sustainer who feeds the whole creation sucks your breast.
You nurse Him like a baby, who by a simple gesture
brings forth all things, hence all generations call you blessed,
Virgin daughter of David. Offer praise and thanksgiving
at all times to the Fruit who came forth from you,
halleluia, halleluia.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord....P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia....P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Father who sent Gabriel to make the announcement to Mary,
give peace and tranquillity to Your Churches,
and protect their people against all harm and evil.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

Gabriel heard the mysterious words,
that were spoken to him secretly by God.
The angel obeyed the command whispered to him
and hastened to set out on his visitation to Mary.

Speak, speak, speak, Mary, for you are fair,
these are the words spoken to me by Gabriel the Archangel,
the creature of fire from the company of the Wakeful Ones.
He greeted me and told me: The Lord is with you,
and shall come forth from you.

Divinity flew down to rescue and lift up humanity,
and truly, the Son beautifully healed
the servants' deformity, halleluia, halleluia,
so that they became God as they desired.

Glory, adoration and honour to the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God, ineffable.
All honour and glory and exaltation belong to Him.
May His gracious love be upon us at all times.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ....P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION

Thursdays in the Season of the Annunciation

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Opening Prayer Make us worthy, Lord.... P.255

Psalm 84 (83) How lovely is Your dwelling place...

Response

Happy are those who dwell in Your house
and never cease from praising You.
They are happy, whose strength is in You,
whose hearts are set on pilgrim ways.

Blessed are You, Son of the Most High,
who at the greeting of the angel descended into the Virgin,
and were greeted by John in the womb of his mother,
when Your Mother entered the house of the barren woman.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

Praise the Lord all you nations,
give Him glory all you peoples.
Steadfast is His loving kindness,
the fidelity of the Lord endures for ever.

Those in heaven sing praise
and those on earth offer adoration
to the One Eternal Being,
God, the Creator of the whole world.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Hidden Father who sent the good tidings to Nazareth, to the Adorable Son who dwelt in the Virgin and confirmed the good tidings, and to the Life-giving and Holy Spirit who by His descent accomplished the wonders. To the one in three belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

Praise to You, O Word Exalted and Lofty, who when You willed to come below made a sign with Your Father secretly and stirred the angel Gabriel and sent him to go before You with power, that he might announce to the Virgin concerning Your glorious conception. Thanksgiving to You, O Word Eternal, who by the Holy Spirit hallowed the dwelling place of the glorious womb of the Holy Virgin and entered by the ear of the maiden and healed the ancient wound of the house of Adam.

Therefore we offer prayers and earnest supplications that You will prompt Your Churches to become more and more like Mary, their exalted model, searching out and doing the will of God in all things. And as she conceived You by the Holy Spirit and brought You forth in the flesh, You may be born also and grow in the hearts of the believers that they may offer praise and thanksgiving to You, and through You and with You, to Your Father who sent You for the salvation of the creation and to Your Holy and Life-giving Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For Mary's Virginal Motherhood

The mountain which God has chosen to dwell on it.

Virgin who were chosen to be the Mother of God,
by you the malediction of this earth has been removed.
Beseech your Son to make His peace and tranquillity reign
in the Churches and in the four quarters of the earth.

The Lord shall dwell on it for ever.

Our God, You made the Holy Virgin Your Mother,
and for us You made the Holy Mother Church.
By the prayer of her who bore You
and of Your Church in whom You very truly dwell,
make Your peace to dwell all over the world.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God,
all generations call you blessed,
you who were worthy to receive Emmanuel, God,
as first revealed by the prophets in their mysteries.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

May the memory of the Holy Virgin Mary, Your Mother,
be like a fragrant incense, O Lord of all.
Bless our assembly by the prayers of all virgins
and keep away from Your people times of distress.

Prayer of Incense

Eternal Son of the Father who are without beginning,
You took flesh from the virginal womb of Mary
to become for us a sacrifice of pardon
and an incense of propitiation in atonement for our sins.

Receive, Lord, in Your love for humankind,
the fragrance of this incense which we offer to You,
and as it ascends into Your presence,
may it burn up in our hearts all the thorns of sin
and make us to turn from evil to good.

For Confidence *Isaiah 40:1-3 and I Peter 1:24-25*

Comfort, Comfort My people;
it is the voice of your God:
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem
and tell her this:

She has fulfilled her term of bondage,
her sin is atoned for her.
She has already received at the Lord's hand
the full measure of suffering for her infidelities...

The voice commands: Cry out!
And the prophet asks: What shall I cry?
That all humankind is like grass;
they last no longer than the flower of the field.

The grass withers and the flower fades
when a wind from the Lord blows on them.

The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of God endures for ever.
What is this word? The Good News that was proclaimed to us.

For the Incarnation of the Word of God

Blessed be Your Glorious Name for ever.

Blessed is the Mighty and Hidden One
who bears the thrones that bear Him.
The Living Creatures who carry Him do not know His place,
and the Fiery Ones hallow Him crying, Holy! Holy! to Him.
You are Holy, Lord, the Strong, in the heights and in the depths.

He who was before the worlds.

Great and glorious mystery that was hidden from all ages.
Prophets, kings and priests waited to see Him.
He revealed Himself in flesh to the angels.
He was made known among the nations
and believed in the four quarters. Glory to Him who sent Him.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to the Son of God who descended and dwelt in the Virgin,
to save Adam and his children immersed in corruption.
Glory to Him who humbled Himself for the race of the mortal ones.
Glory to Him who by His coming liberates the whole creation.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Mary, Mother of God, by your prayers and supplications,
may peace and tranquillity reign in the four quarters of the earth.
May there be concord among rulers, justice with love for the people.
May our Lord keep away from the earth times of distress.

We make memory of our fathers who taught us, when they were alive,
to be children of God in this world which passes away.
Son of God, give them rest in the heavenly kingdom with the just
and the righteous, in the world which does not pass away.

A SERVICE FOR THE EUCHARIST

As in the Weekly Celebration of the Economy of Salvation on Thursdays, Vol.1, P. 131

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

By night we offer praise to Your sovereignty
for all Your commandments,
they are light and strength.

As we awake from sleep and come into Your presence
with the Wakeful Ones and the angels,
we offer fair praises.

Gabriel, the archangel, carried the peace
and gave it to Mary, saying: Peace be with you, full of grace;
the Lord is with you, O Blessed One.

Peace be with you, O Pure and Holy One.
Peace be with you, Virgin, unacquainted with marriage.
Peace be with you, Bride and Mother of the Lord of all creatures.

Let us offer thanksgiving, adoration and praise
to the Being Adorable above all,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 122 To You have I lifted up my eyes.....

Response

Like the eyes of a servant,
on the hands of her mistress,

our eyes are on the Lord our God,
till He show us His love.

Grant us, our Saviour, that at all times,
we may please Your Majesty by all good works,
and even by suffering hardships for justice.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Holy One who in holiness made holy the Holy Virgin Mary who bore Him. He lifted high the little one who gave Him suck and made her glorious in her lowliness. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We offer You, Lord, the petitions of Your Mother full of blessings, and we take refuge in You, that You may deliver us from the passions of sin. Bind us by the true faith and gird us with holy love, and make us glorious by deeds of right living, that we may always exalt Your Blessed Mother and that we may come to the rest of those who sing praise, and with them we and our departed, the people of the Holy Church, may offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Incarnation of the Word of God

Who will tell His wonders?

Who can tell the wonders
which Christ the King did for the earthly ones?
In His love He willed to take the form of a servant,
and raised to life the race of the mortal ones,
by the body with which He clothed Himself.

He set His chariot on the clouds.

He made His dwelling in the sea, as David said.
The Holy One walked on the wings of the wind.
Glory to Him and to Him who sent Him.
Blessed be the glory of the Lord of all creatures,
who lowered Himself for us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

He who in the beginning was with Him who begot Him
and at whose command all things come into existence
humbled Himself and became man of His own will.
He fills the heights and the depths
and they cannot contain Him.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

On the day of the announcement of Your birth, Lord Jesus,
make Your peace and tranquillity to dwell in Your Holy Church,
that with her people she may offer praise to Your Godhead,
and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, unceasingly.

Hymn *Madrosho*

Mary carries Him who carries all things.
She ascends the mountain of Judah,
and enters the house of Zechariah,
and greets Elizabeth.

Elizabeth heard the greeting
of the pure and holy mother,
and went out in haste
to bow before the Lord who dwelt in her.

Blessed are You Son of the Most High
who, by the greeting of the angel,
descended into the Virgin, You whose mother
greeted the barren woman when she entered her house.

Mary and Elizabeth are worthy to be praised,
who both conceived in a wonderful manner,
the one in her old age,
the other in virginity.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 126 If the Lord does not build the house...

Response

Let us put away all anxious thoughts
about food and drink to keep us alive...
the birds of the air do not sow and reap and store in barns,
yet our Heavenly Father feeds them.

Let us set our minds on God's Kingdom and its righteousness
before everything else and all the rest will come to us as well.
Let us not be anxious about tomorrow,
tomorrow will look after itself.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise...to Him who is confessed in unity and worshipped and glorified in trinity. He is three holy persons who are one in equality of essence and nature and are one Godhead. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

We take refuge in you, O faithful stewards, who have authority over the house of heaven, divine preachers, blessed pastors, skilful physicians, foundations that cannot be shaken, storehouses of the spirit. Beloved of the Father, friends of the Son, familiars of the Holy Spirit, be our intercessors with the Holy Trinity, that there may be bestowed on us, by your prayers, the knowledge of faith, understanding and discernment of virtue and a right mind and intelligence that we may follow along the path to the Kingdom which you trod for us. And may we be worthy of the lot which has fallen to you, that with one accord we may offer praise to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Incarnation of the Word of God

He lowered the heaven and descended.

From the ranks of fire and spirit and from His exalted condition,
the Word of the Father descended and dwelt in a womb of flesh.

From the womb of Mary He was manifested to the creation,
and by His holy birth He enlightened the whole world.
On the day of His nativity, He rejoices angels and people on earth.
Glory to Him for His goodness who thus lowered His greatness,
and humbled Himself and became man for the sake of Adam,
to make him inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

Be, Lord, our God.

The Lord who fills all things by Himself,
in His greatness withdrew within a womb.
As a sea of fire poured into a waterpot, all encompassed,
remains without overflowing, the Word dwelt within the womb.
As the sun rising on the earth penetrates it entirely, the Lord
who in His love makes His majesty to dwell in all things,
chose Mary and dwelt in her and came forth from her,
and delivered us from deceit and untruth.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

All the generations who had some knowledge of this
inestimable treasure, hold our generation blessed;
for they had hoped to see it, but could reach it
only in their dreams, while we enjoy it in reality.
For them it remained a sealed treasure.
They had been wondering to whom it would be opened.
They had longed for it, the just, the prophets and kings,
and all the good people who had some knowledge of it.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The heights and the depths and all things in them clap hands for joy,
and chant praise to the Only Son of God who left the Living Creatures
and chose the virginal womb of a daughter of David.
She carried Him, nursed Him and gave Him all honour.
Yet He did not depart from the side of His Father.
We proclaim the mystery of Him who is infinite
and who became an infant of His own will.
He now magnifies His Church in the four quarters of the earth.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord..P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord....P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens....P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Father who sent Gabriel to make the announcement to Mary,
give peace and tranquillity to Your Churches,
and protect their people against all harm and evil.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

When He descended on earth, our Lord considered all women.
One He chose among all for her beauty,
for He found in her humility and holiness,
all movements of her heart sincere, and love of the Divinity.

As she was chosen to be the Mother of God,
she grew up to the full perfection of beauty.
She grew until she reached the highest holiness,
as He who is all holy had His dwelling in her.

She consented to be, like the heavenly ones, a chariot
bearing with magnificence the Son of God in her virginity.
He who dwells in heaven dwelt in the womb divinely,
equally exalted in both, the heaven and the womb Blessed be His glory.

Glory to You, Exalted One, who humbled Yourself to feebleness
when You descended and dwelt
in the little womb of a daughter of the poor.
Good One who out of love became man from a daughter of man,
in Your graciousness pardon the living and the dead. To You be glory.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Fridays in the Season of the Annunciation
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Opening Prayer Make us worthy, Lord.... P. 255

Psalm 85 (84) O Lord, You once favoured Your land...

Response

Love and fidelity have come together.
Justice and peace have embraced.
Truth sprang up from the earth
and righteousness poured down from heaven...
Our earth yielded its fruit.

From Your place on high, O Lord of power and might,
make the light of Your grace to shine upon us,
that with all the just who loved You,
and the believers who committed themselves to You in faith,
we may be found worthy to have a place at Your wedding feast.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us....p.3

Response

He who bears the whole creation
was borne by the wood of the Cross.
The Living One and Giver of Life
tasted death of His own will.

He whom the boundaries of the world cannot hold,
and the whole creation cannot contain,
was laid to rest in the tomb,
God mighty for evermore reclined among the dead.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the King on high who sent a message of peace to the Virgin, and hallowed her by the Holy Spirit and made her a sanctuary for His dwelling. To Him, for His willing emptying of Himself and His humility beyond telling, belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Sun of Righteousness and Saviour of all, Christ our God, You were born of the Father without time and without beginning. Of Your own will and that of the Holy Spirit You descended from the lofty heights of Your majesty and rested and dwelt in the Holy Virgin Mary. We worship and we give thanks and with David the Prophet we say: Let everything that breathes praise the Lord, because He has done wonderful things. Wonderful was it in truth that God should descend from heaven for the salvation of the race of the children of men. And when He saw it fallen into sin, He sent His message to the Holy Virgin Mary to announce Your glorious conception. And when the angel saw her he cried with a loud voice and said: Peace be with you, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed among women. Peace be with you, full of grace, living temple of the Word of God. Peace be with you full of grace, dwelling place of the Divine Fire. Peace be with you, full of grace, imperishable storehouse of the heavenly bread. Peace be with you, full of grace, Mother of the Ancient of Days who was pleased to become an infant in your womb.

Therefore, we also who believe declare you blessed, while we beg and beseech you to intercede for us with God who was born of you, that He may grant us to experience His love and tendernes, and make us worthy by His grace to give thanks for His salvation and to praise Him and His Father, and His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For Mary's Divine Motherhood

Behold, from today all generations will call me blessed!

Holy Virgin, Mother of God, all generations bless you,
because the Word of God came forth from your womb,
rejoicing the heavenly ones and gladdening the earthly ones.
Halleluia, halleluia, may your prayer be for us
a place of protection and a house of refuge.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Blessed are you, Holy Mother of God,
for in you are fulfilled all the mysteries of the prophets.
By the birth that came forth from you, Adam ascended on high.
He sings praise to your Son who came to save him,
halleluia, halleluia, may your prayer help us by night and by day.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory to Him who came and sprang forth from Mary
and made her a house of refuge for the race of mortals,
that by her prayers we all may be saved from all harm,
and sing glory, halleluia, halleluia.
Son who came forth from her, pardon us, be gracious to us!

Prayer of Incense

Accept, Lord, this fragrant incense
which we offer to You in commemoration
of Your marvellous conception in the womb of the Virgin,
by the power and overshadowing of the Holy Spirit.

Let the commemoration of Mary who conceived You in virginity,
You the Saviour of the whole creation,
be like an incense of sweet fragrance
to You, to Your Churches and to the whole world.

A Prayer for Salvation *Isaiah 45:6-8*

He is the Lord, there is no other.
He makes the light and creates darkness,
He brings both blessing and disaster.
He, the Lord, does all these things.

Shower, O heavens, from above,
and let the skies rain down righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation may spring up,
and righteousness sprout up also.

For the Incarnation of the Word of God

He makes His lightnings to shine all over the world.

The Son of the Hidden and Exalted Father
like a flashing lightning descended on the maiden.
A great wonder indeed that she was not burnt,
she who held a blaze in her womb of flesh.

Bless the Lord at all times.

Blessed is the Fruit of Life who descended from on high,
and sprang and grew up from the thirsty ground of Mary,
to give hope and encouragement to the mortal ones,
that they will rise from their graves on the last day.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah the Prophet announced:
A virgin will conceive and bear a son, Emmanuel.
In truth she gave birth, as he prophesied.
And by this birth the world is saved from deceit and untruth.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory to You, loving manifestation from above,
who appeared for us at the end of time, from a daughter of David,
to give hope and encouragement to the house of Adam.
In You they obtain the new life which never ends.

The dead who ate Your body, O our Saviour,
and drank the cup of salvation of Your precious blood,
raise them from their graves without corruption
and clothe them with glory at the bridal feast of light.

A SERVICE FOR THE MARTYRS

As in the Weekly Celebration of the Economy of Salvation

on Fridays Vol. 1, P. 157

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

Awaken us and raise us from our sleep, Christ our God,
that with the assemblies of the people of the light,
we may praise You with faith, O Wakeful One who do not sleep.

Christ our God, Radiant Brightness who appeared from the Father,
You willed to be born of a virgin, You who are God above all.
Come, all nations, let us offer praise to Him.

Christ our God, born of Mary,
You willed to be an infant to save our race from deceit and untruth.
Come, all nations, let us offer praise to Him.

Isaiah prophesied: Behold, a virgin shall conceive
and bring forth a child who is a wonder,
and His name shall be Emmanuel.
Come, all nations, let us offer praise to Him.

Glory to the Father and thanksgiving to the Son who is from Him.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy. The Mystery of the Trinity
which is One Being, to be worshipped and praised.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 129 Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord...

Response

My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I hope for the fulfilment of His word.
My soul is longing for the Lord...

Like men who watch for the morning we look for the Lord,
for in Him is love unfailing.

We call upon You, Lord, in our grief.
Hear us, in the abundance of Your grace.
Make us worthy of Your Kingdom,
that on the day of Your coming in glory
we may sing Your praise among the companies of the saints.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.... to the Splendid and Glorious One who chose a daughter of David in her lowliness for His majesty, to the Magnificent and Mighty One who looked upon the lowliness of His handmaid and made her the marriage chamber of His greatness. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ our God, King of kings and Lord of lords, for our salvation You embraced the contempt of men and dwelt in holiness in the womb of the Virgin. In regard to her soul and body she was signified beforehand by the prophets, when one of them by the bush which was on fire but was not burnt up, truly made known her virginity . Another by the ark of the covenant which was made of pure gold and unblemished wood, signified her. Another made her known by the door which was not to be opened except for the Lord.

Therefore, Holy Mother full of grace, who by the child who sprang forth from you, gave joy to those in heaven and those on earth, pray for us to Christ our God that He may bestow on us, on this day of your glorious remembrance, lasting peace and abundance of prosperity, perfect health to all who are sick and afflicted, and a good remembrance of those who rest in His hope, in His abundant grace and mercy, and that of His Father and of His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For Mary's Virginal Motherhood

How blessed and gracious you are!

Blessed are you, Mary, whom Isaiah signified in his oracle:
A virgin shall be with child and bear a son
and His name shall be Wonder.
Blessed are You Firstborn Son of God
who willed to become the firstborn son of a virgin.

Then the nations will say

Blessed are you, O Daughter of David, Holy Virgin,
who were found worthy to be the Mother of the Son of God.
Behold, your remembrance is honoured
in the four quarters of the creation.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Happy are you, Blessed Mother, Glorious Bride,
who in virginity gave birth to the Firstborn of the Exalted One
who came forth from your beauty to save His Church from untruth
and remove all harm and evil from the world.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

On this day of the remembrance of the Blessed One,
the Holy Virgin Mary, the whole creation rejoices
and sings praise to the Good One who appeared from her
and magnifies the day of her feast.

Hymn *Madrosho*

Blessed are you Mary whom the prophets signified in their mysteries,
whom they described in their figures, parables and images.
Gideon depicted you as the fleece, Ezekiel as the closed door.
Isaiah cried out and said: Behold a virgin shall conceive
and bring forth a wonder. Blessed is the Firstborn of God
who became the firstborn of a virgin.

Blessed are you Mary whom the Holy Spirit overshadowed,
who chose you for your beauty to be a temple in His honour,
for the Son of the King to dwell in you. All generations on earth
will call you blessed, who joyfully bore Him who wields power
in the heights and in the depths, and you gave Him pure milk.
Glory to Him who so humbled Himself for our feeble race.

Which indeed is the mouth able to praise your purity,
or the tongue able to tell the fair beauty of your chastity
whose Son is lauded by the ranks of fire and spirit?
On you we look with marvel as on the chariot of the cherubim.
How were you able to bear the Exalted One hidden
from the ranks of angels, glorified by the movements of the wheels?

How were you able to bear the Exalted One secretly?
In the form of dew gently flowing on the fleece, He rested
magnificently on you and you received Him silently. In this way
the Word descended from the Father and rested in the womb of Mary
while the seal of her virginity remained and was preserved.
He came forth from her in a body, a wonder which cannot be told.
Blessed is the mystery of Your birth, Your adorable birth from Mary.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 130 O Lord, my heart is not proud.....

Response

O Lord, we are not concerned with things too great,
nor do we look for things too marvellous for us.
We accept ourselves as we are, poor and lowly,
for we find all our joy in You.

Sea of Mercy and Compassion, from You come all good things.
Pour Your compassion on sinners who come to You in repentance.
In Your goodness, grant us the pardon of our faults and sins,
You who are the Great Lover of Humankind.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise ...to the Adorable Lord for whose sake the martyrs were slain, the Lord who made His servants victorious over impious rulers, the Head of the martyrs who receives the sacrifice of those who lay down their life for Him. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ our God, Light and Splendour of the saints, who taught us that there is no greater love than that a man should lay down his life for his friends, while You are He who gave Your life for us, You made the martyrs the imitators of Your passion. They left the world and found You by being slain. They were baptized by the blood of their necks and lost their lives, that they might find You who are the true life.

Therefore, we beseech You, Christ our Saviour, by the offering of Your martyrs, be propitious to Your Holy Church and bestow on her the lasting peace which comes from You. Remove from her destructive divisions. Confirm in her Your faithful promise that the gates of hell shall never prevail against her. Make us worthy with the martyrs and all the departed believers to rejoice in Your Kingdom. And we will offer You praise and thanksgiving, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For Mary's Divine Motherhood

At that time the nations will say

You are blessed, daughter of the just, Mother of God.
His love was with you, you found favour in His sight.
You carried Him and He magnifies your remembrance,
halleluia, halleluia, in heaven and on earth.

How blessed and gracious you are!

All generations will count me blessed, said Mary,
who gave birth to the Son and betrothed Him to the Church.
And now the Church sings praise, halleluia, halleluia,
to the Bridegroom who espoused her.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Mary and Elizabeth were ships that sailed into harbour.
Elizabeth brought forth the Preacher of Truth
and Mary gave birth to the Saviour of the world.
Halleluia, halleluia, may their prayers be with us.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Not among the virgins, nor among the maidens,
not among former generations, nor among fine gold,
nor among the comely beauties is there anyone as beautiful as Mary,
halleluia, halleluia, the daughter of Joachim and Hannah.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamation Blessed be the glory of the Lord.. P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord.. P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Father who sent Gabriel to make the announcement to Mary,
give peace and tranquillity to Your Churches
and protect their people against all harm and evil.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

Blessed are you, Mary, who became mother of the Son of God.
By you was set right the fall of Paradise.
The fruit of your womb is medicine of life for humankind.
By it Adam and Eve are restored to the inheritance they had lost.

Blessed are you, Mary, your womb was a pure temple.
In you the Word of the Father became flesh, taking a body.
Blessed are you who gave milk to the Lord of the worlds,
and carried Him like an infant in your arms and on your knees.

Pray and beseech Him who was so fond of your words,
that He may make His peace to dwell in the Churches,
who magnify the day of your remembrance.
By your prayers may all afflictions pass away from them,
and the departed who died in the faith rest in His mercy.

Glory to the Father who chose you, Mary , from all generations.
Adoration to the Son who dwelt in your womb in holiness.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who joins with the earthly ones.
Blessed is He who magnifies your memory in the Churches.
May your prayer be with us!

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P.6

MEDITATION

Saturdays in the Season of the Annunciation

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Opening Prayer · Make us worthy, Lord.... P. 255

Psalm 86 (85) Turn Your ear, O Lord, and give answer...

Response

O Lord, You are good and forgiving,
full of love for all who cry to You.
Listen, O Lord, to our prayer
and hear our pleading.
In the day of distress we will call,
and surely You will reply.

Lord our Lord, do not judge us according to our evil deeds.
Do not requite us according to our wrongdoing.
In Your love You created us.
In Your love You corrected us.
In Your love You redeemed us,
O God, abounding in love.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

To You, Lord, our eyes are turned.
In You we take refuge; do not leave us helpless.
Keep us from the trap which they have laid for us,
from the snares of those who do evil.

Blessed are you, dead, you who ate the life-giving body
and drank the blood poured out in sacrifice.
On the day of the resurrection,
it shall raise you up at the right hand side.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Only-begotten of the Father, the Eternal Word, who at the announcement of Gabriel the Archangel came to rest in the womb of the Virgin, the Daughter of David, and took from her a body to offer propitiation for the sins of the race of Adam. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

To You be praise and thanksgiving, Christ Jesus, our God, who when You wished to save our race from the fall of our father Adam inclined the heavens and descended and dwelt in the womb of the Virgin Mary, when in answer to the message of Gabriel the Archangel she offered herself to be Your Mother saying: I am the Lord's servant; as you have spoken, so be it. And by her acceptance the ancient wall of enmity between God and humankind began to crumble and the creation was filled with joy. Exultation without limit took hold of her, and we also stand in wonder and admiration, and we proclaim with hearts overflowing with joy that the Lord has come to deliver the world from its enslavement to sin.

Therefore, we beseech the Holy Virgin Mary that, as her prayer of surrender to God was fulfilled on the day of the announcement of the angel and she became Your Mother, Mother of God and Mother of the new human race, she may intercede with her Son that all the tribes and peoples and nations may be happily gathered together in peace and harmony into the one people of God, and offer praise and thanksgiving with us to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Coming of the Messiah *Isaiah 11:1-9*

Who will tell His wonders?

Then a shoot shall grow from the stock of Jesse,
a branch shall spring from its roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,
a spirit of wisdom and understanding,
a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge.
He will find His delight in revering the Lord.

He comes to judge and He establishes peace.

He shall not judge by appearance,
nor give verdict on hearsay.
He shall judge the poor with justice
and defend the humble in the land with equity.
His mouth shall be a rod to strike down the ruthless,
and with a word He shall slay the wicked.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Round the waist He shall wear the belt of justice,
and good faith shall be the girdle round His body.
Then the wolf shall live with the sheep in peace
and the leopard lie down with the kid.
The calf and the young lion will feed together
and a little child shall take care of them.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The lion shall eat straw like the cattle.
The infant shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the young child dance over the viper's nest.
They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain.
For as the waters fill the sea,
so shall the land be filled with the knowledge of God.

Prayer of Incense

Prompt us, O Lord, to make known to all people,
like a sweet smell that spreads everywhere,
Your wonderful conception from a daughter of man
and Your coming forth from her virginal womb.

Make us into a fragrant scent of that incense
that You Yourself offer to God
for all those who seek Your salvation,
a life-giving fragrance that brings life to all.

For the Incarnation of the Word of God

Bless the Lord at all times.

Blessed be Christ, the Word of God,
who humbled Himself for our salvation.

He dwelt in the womb of the Blessed One,
the pure Virgin Mary, the Daughter of David.
He became man and fulfilled all the Scriptures,
to make Adam and Eve ascend to Paradise.

His graciousness is on all humankind.

The love of the Exalted One was revealed when He descended
for the sake of Adam who was immersed in sin.
He put on a body to become one of us,
and for our salvation made Himself nothing.
We praise His love, the love of Him, who humbled Himself
for the sake of Adam, to raise him up from his fall.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Moses on the mountain saw a wonderful thing:
fire in a bush which was not consumed.
It prefigured for us the mystery of the Life-giving Son
who, though He was fire, rested in a womb of flesh.
Praise to Him who came and fulfilled the parables
by which the prophets, in the spirit, had announced Him.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Ezekiel saw Him on the chariot,
and Daniel on the throne of fire.
Isaiah saw Him as a plant sprouting and growing
on a thirsty land. David spoke of Mary as the city,
from which will spring up
Him whose name is to last for ever.

Lord, our Lord, in Your graciousness and compassion,
remember our dead who ate Your body and drank Your blood,
and who went to sleep, our Lord, and rest in Your hope.
When You come to judge the nations and races
make them enter with You the heavenly resting place.

SERVICE FOR THE DEPARTED AND THE RESURRECTION

As in the Weekly Celebration of the Economy of Salvation on Saturdays Vol.1., P.185

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy!Holy!Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and the children of men cry, Holy! Holy! to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Wakeful One descended to the side of Mary
when she was at prayer, and he addressed her saying:
Peace be with You, O full of grace,
the Lord is with you, blessed among women.

By the peace which the Wakeful One gave to Mary,
the Virgin, the Daughter of David
received a wonderful conception.
The Power of the Most High overshadowed her.
And He sprang forth from her and saved the creation.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him be praise. And on us His graciousness for ever.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 143:1-10 Blessed be the Lord, my rock....

Response

Blessed be the Lord, my rock,
my faithful love, my fortress.
He is my stronghold, my saviour,
my shield, my place of refuge.

To You, O God, I sing a new song;
I play on the ten-stringed lute,
to You who give kings their victories,
who rescued Your servant David.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Eternal Being who shone forth gloriously as the joyous light and was born in the flesh from the Holy Virgin Mary who is praised by those in heaven and those on earth. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

We beseech you, O Holy Virgin, Mother of God the Word, that you will intercede for us with Christ who came forth from you, that He may bestow on us, on this day of your remembrance, the pardon of our offences, and give peace to the Churches and the monasteries. May He give health to the sick, great consolation to the sorrowing, plenty to the hungry, release to those in bondage and hope to the sad-hearted. To all those who have asked for prayers from our poor selves, may He send an angel of peace. May He give rest to our departed who have slept in true faith and bring them to the dwellings of the blessed. And there may we and they offer praise and thanksgiving to Him and to His Hidden Father and to His Life-giving Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Incarnation of the Word of God

Come and see the works of God.

Through His Son the Father made a wonder
for the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.
Of this Gabriel the Wakeful One is witness,

who was sent from God to Mary, the Blessed One,
and he gave her His message:
Peace be with you, O full of grace;
the Lord is with you, O blessed among women.
Your Son will liberate the creation.

Judgement comes from His mouth.

Daniel the Prophet told me how he saw the Son:
I saw Him riding on the clouds,
and He was like the Ancient of Days.
His garment was white as snow,
and His hair was like pure wool.
He was like a blaze and His throne was of fire,
and He was served by the Fiery Ones.
Glory to Him and to Him who sent Him.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Blessed is the Word who descended
and became flesh from the womb of the Blessed One.
He was conceived by her without marriage,
by the power of the Holy Spirit.
He came forth from her wondrously
without breaking the seal of virginity.
Blessed is He who descended and became man
to give life to Adam and his people.
Glory to Him and to Him who sent Him.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

To those who question the virgin birth of Christ
the Church gives three signs:.
the tree, the rock and the fish who gave fruit
like Mary without marriage.
The tree that gave a lamb for Abraham's sacrifice.
The fish that held out a silver coin for Peter.
And the rock that shed forth water for the people.
We offer praise to Christ born of a virgin mother.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 144: 1-9 I will give You glory, O God...

Response

Great is the Lord and worthy of all praise,
His greatness cannot be measured.
The Lord is gracious and full of compassion,
forbearing and abounding in love.

The Lord is faithful in all His words
and loving in all His deeds.
The Lord supports all who fall
and raises all who are bowed down.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to Him who crowns the martyrs and in whom the saints put their trust, to that great and glorious source of life, the blood and water poured out from His side on Golgotha in the middle of the earth, which made drunk the holy martyrs, so that they conquered and overcame the Evil One and his powers in their trial and conflict. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil..

We beseech you, prophets, apostles and martyrs, visit our weakness by your prayers, and establish the world in peace and tranquillity...Grant healing to all those who suffer in body, soul or spirit. Renew the pattern of ecclesiastical law among us that we may be true images of the Gospel, and let us be called and invited to your festivals. May the departed believers who took refuge in you in their lifetime come to dwell with you in heaven. And may we and they be worthy to sing praise with you and render thanksgiving to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

For the Incarnation of the Word of God

Who will tell His wonders?

Great is this wonder, beloved: the Word of God

dwelt in the womb of Mary and took a body from her.
He entered by the ear and she did not perceive,
as He entered spiritually.
He made for Himself a body within her womb.
He put on flesh and was seen in it.
Born in the flesh He preserved the seal of her virginity.
Great is the marvel of His conception,
and great is the wonder of His birth.
Blessed is He who came and saved us
by the body which He received from us.

Come, listen and declare it to them.

He who spread out the heaven with a gesture,
and who made the earth by His command,
and created Adam and Eve fashioning them in His own image,
descended on earth to renew that likeness
which had been distorted by the evil Serpent,
in the Paradise, from the beginning.
In Sheol their image lay corrupted and full of wretchedness.
But His love moved Him and He descended to save them by His birth,
and raised them up by His manifestation.
And He led them and their children to the tree of delights.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Wonderful indeed is our God, as Isaiah declared,
who without change became an infant in the womb.
Wonderful that God mighty for evermore came to be conceived.
Wonderful that He who provides for the creation sucks milk.
Wonderful His humility. Full of wonder are His ways.
Wonderful that He came to birth and became man of His own will
and gave life to the dead by the miracles He performed.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Listen, all you peoples. Hearken, O inhabitants of the earth,
to the voice of the prophets who announce about the Child.
Isaiah calls Him: Wonder, God mighty for evermore.
David: the Shoot that sprouts from within the earth.
Zechariah: the Rising Sun, and Micah: King and Ruler.

Daniel: the Ancient of Days, and Ezekiel: the Man of Fire.
Blessed is He who came and manifested Himself by fulfilling their sayings.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord..P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia..P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Blessed are You who through the Wakeful One
sent peace to the Blessed One.

Make Your peace to dwell in the Churches
and heal in them the deep wound of disunity.

The angel descended to your reverence, O Virgin Mary,
Daughter of David, from the place of the heavenly ones,
and the ranks of the Fiery Ones, and he bowed respectfully to you.
Gabriel worshipped before you and with his mouth of fire
the spiritual being gave you the greeting of peace.
He announced to you a conception without marriage,
the conception of Him who is to save the worlds by His grace.

Many noble thoughts arise in my mind, said Mary.
Are there no good rooms in the king's palaces?
No good resting places that the Lord should turn to me
and wish to make His dwelling in me?
O Lord, You have chosen me from all generations.
You who are carried on the wings of the Living Creatures,
I will now carry You in my poor arms.

Henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
In heaven they will call me blessed because He who dwells with them
has come to make His dwelling within me.
Kings and priests and prophets will call me blessed
because they see their words and deeds fulfilled in me.
Above all Adam will call me blessed
because through me he found his way back to Paradise.

Glory to the Father who chose Mary, the daughter of David, and sent
a Wakeful One to greet her and to tell her about the childbirth.
Thanksgiving to His Son who descended and dwelt in her womb.
And to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy,
who made her His temple according to His will.
Blessed is the mystery of the Three. To Him be praise from all mouths.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ....P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

DECEMBER 3

Commemoration of Saint Francis Xavier[19]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord God, that with true faith and undivided love we may celebrate the commemoration of Saint Francis Xavier, the confessor of Your truth, who renounced the world and all its pleasures, and endured hardships and afflictions to make the nations Your disciples. He was thus perfected in all virtues, whether of the flesh or of the spirit. For all this we offer praise to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 112(111) :1-9 Happy the man who reveres the Lord...

Response

The good man has no fear of evil ways;
with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord...
Open-handed, he gives to the poor.
His justice stands firm for ever.
His head will be raised in glory.

Blessed Francis Xavier, you fashioned yourself
in the image of your Lord, of His boundless love.
And as you experienced in your heart
His unfathomable love for you, you committed yourself
to the truth of His Gospel in selfless service.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us....P.3

Response

Blessed is He who magnifies the day of your remembrance
in the Churches which are adorned with your beauty,
O noble Saint Francis Xavier.
May your prayer assist us.

Blessed is He who rejoices the heavenly ones
and gladdens the earthly ones with your commemoration,
O holy father Saint Francis Xavier.
May your prayer assist us.

Blessed is He who makes to flow from your body,
enshrined at Goa and incorrupted to this day,
remedies for all afflictions, O holy father Saint Francis Xavier.
May your prayer assist us.

Blessed is He who has made you
a harbour of salvation and a house of refuge
for all who are afflicted or oppressed.
May your prayer assist us.

Adoration to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
the Mystery of the Trinity adored and glorified
by the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Strong One, who by His might cast down the Adversary from his rule over us, and by His saving Cross made him to be trodden underfoot by those who follow in His footsteps.. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

Christ our God, in whose eyes the death of Your saints is precious and in whose sight their remembrance is cherished, You willed that on this day the noble athlete and faithful labourer, the wise merchant and obedient servant Francis Xavier should depart from this world. He bent his neck from the days of his youth and took upon him Your gentle yoke

in meekness and was struck by the arrow of Your love. He gave up the world and all that is in it for the sake of Your friendship. Make us worthy now to celebrate the great deeds of this mighty apostle who carried Your holy name to the furthest parts of the East and preached Your Gospel to the most distant people of the earth. We honour him above all as the apostle of our country who laboured in this part of Your vineyard and sacrificed himself for the sake of Your flock. He preached the Gospel to the poor and baptized multitudes in Your Name, teaching them to observe the way of Your commandments. When he had established many Churches in face of much opposition, he departed from this country to carry the Good News to the islands of the East and Japan, where many people turned to Your faith by the sweetness of his discourses and the beauty of his way of life. Finally, while seeking to enter the mainland of China to carry the message of Your Gospel there, he surrendered his life to You.

We beseech You, therefore, to inspire us by his example. Fill us with the love which inflamed his heart. Enable us to offer our lives to You, that Your truth may be made known to all people and that all may be enlightened by Your faith and submit to the yoke of Your love. And we will praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Blessed are you, true disciple and great lover of Christ,
who made His vineyard bear fruit in India and the Far East.
You gave yourself to Him without ever counting the cost,
labouring untiringly, unmindful of earthly rewards.

On the land or at sea, always preaching the Crucified,
in Goa's prisons and hospitals, day and night,
you comforted the patients and gave hope to the distressed,
victims of their weakness in a world of greed and war.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

At times, leaving the hospitals
you would go up and down the streets and squares,
a bell in your hand, to call the children and the grown-ups
to come and listen to Christian doctrine in a neighbouring Church.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

But it was the downtrodden that had your predilection,
the Paravas —pearl fishers— of the southern coast,
oppressed both by their masters and by the traders.
You preached the Gospel to them, the way of God's commandments,
often giving baptism to whole villages.

We make memory of our fathers who in their lifetime
taught us to be children of God in this passing world.
Son of God, grant them rest in Your Kingdom
with all the just and righteous,
in that world which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

May the sweet smelling incense which we offer to You,
on the day of the remembrance of Your servant Francis Xavier,
be pleasing to Your Lordship, O Lord of lords,
and may our praise and thanksgiving delight Your Godhead.

May they be joined with his prayers
that they may be acceptable in Your sight,
that in tranquillity and peace, love, sweetness and joy,
we may give You glory with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us!

May your prayer be with us, blessed Francis Xavier,
may your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayer and be gracious to all.

Pray and make supplication to Him who is all graciousness,
that He may remove all harm and evil
from those who take refuge in you with faith.

See, we have come together for your commemoration,
O holy confessor of the truth, beloved friend of the Son
and sharer of His mysteries. You are the wise man
who by your prayers relieved misery,
enlighten our minds by the grace dwelling in your bones.

You pleased your Lord from your youth by your way of life.
And as you advanced in years you were found worthy
of an altogether angelic way of life.
O holy one, your body is a fine pearl,
your countenance shines like lightning in the Holy Church.

Blessed are you, holy one, whose life was spiritual,
never were you slow in the service of the Lord, your Lord.
Blessed are you, chosen one. With joy of heart the Holy Church
reveres with the kiss of peace your incorrupted body.

Glory to the Father, adoration to the Son
and thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit, one God,
who magnifies and honours the memory of His servant.
By his prayers may He make to pass away from us all harm and evil
and make us worthy of His graciousness and help at all times.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The just flourish like the palm tree,
like the cedar of Lebanon extending its branches.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Planted in the house of the Lord,
they grow vigorously in the courts of God.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Mark 16:15-20 Jesus sends His disciples to the whole world.

Intercessions Let us offer prayers to the Lord and answer all together with joy and earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who became for us the way, the truth and the life and who called Francis Xavier to walk in Your footsteps by proclaiming the Good News to the whole creation, renew Your Churches all over the world and us all in the spirit of the Gospel, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who when You were found on earth for our salvation revealed to us the heights of divine perfection by Your wondrous deeds and the life-giving words of Your Gospel, make Your Churches true and visible witnesses of the salvation and peace which You brought to the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop, N..our Bishop, N..our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishop's and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant, Christ our God, that while we honour and exalt in purity and holiness and with songs of the Holy Spirit, the festival of Your confessor, Francis Xavier, we may through his intercession share in his zeal for Your Kingdom, and learn from him how to labour for it unmindful of rewards, with that love whose reward is love itself, we beseech You and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, ...P.7

Response

As we awake from sleep,
we offer praise and exaltation to the Hidden Father,
and to the Adorable Son who comes forth from Him
and to the Holy Spirit, the comforter.

Wakeful One of the Wakeful Ones, we minister to You.
The angels sing Your praise,
and the Living Creatures bless Your name.
Awaken us to sing glory with them at all times.

Blessed and chosen Francis Xavier, holy and glorious,
fair model of apostolic zeal and teacher of perfection,
be with us as we are gathered here
to keep vigil in commemoration of you.

Stand well, mighty hero,
at the head of the ranks of your devotees
and by the power of your strength help us
to celebrate with pure hearts the day of your commemoration.

Glory to the Father who chose you,
and to the Son who strengthened you in the spiritual combat,
and to the Holy Spirit who magnifies and honours
the great day of your commemoration, O holy Francis Xavier.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 1 Happy indeed is the man...

Response

Happy is the man whose delight is in the Lord!
He is like a tree planted beside flowing waters,
whose leaves never fade and who gives fruit in due season.
The Lord Himself guards over his ways.

Heaven and earth and all that is in them,
call blessed our chosen father Saint Francis Xavier
who adorned our Churches with his great labours for the Gospel
and, behold, now he exults in the Kingdom.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Word of the Eternal Father who lowered Himself to dwell in the womb of the Virgin and was clothed in flesh from her and came forth from her womb. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We salute you, Mary, Mother of God, light never extinguished, Mother and Virgin. It is through you that He comes. He who in the holy Gospel comes in the name of the Lord. It is through you that the Trinity is blessed, that the Cross is worshipped throughout the world. Through you the Enemy is defeated and the fallen head of the creation is re-elevated to heaven, and all creation returns to the knowledge of the truth. Through you all the believers obtain baptism and the oil of joy. Through you Churches are founded in all the world, people obtain conversion because through you that unique Son of God illumines with His light those who are in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Therefore, we beg of you, O Mother of Graciousness, that you will intercede with your Son and your God and obtain for us that repentance which crucifies sin, and compunction which brings blessedness, that like our father Saint Francis Xavier we may experience the bliss of the beatitudes. Through virginity and poverty, sobriety and watchfulness, may we, his disciples, radiate in this homeland of asceticism and contemplation the spiritual beauty of the Gospel, and through unceasing prayer and humble service attain the heights of divine charity, to be in truth, like your Son Jesus, sons of the Father and brothers to all people, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn of Saint Ephrem

No one quite knows, Lord, what to call Your mother:
Should we call her virgin?
But her giving birth is an established fact.
Or married woman? But no man has known her.
If Your mother's case is beyond comprehension,
who can hope to understand Yours?

She alone is Your mother,
but she is Your sister, with everyone else.
She was Your mother, she was Your sister.
She was Your bride too, along with all chaste souls.
You, who are Your mother's beauty,
Yourself adorned her with everything!

She was betrothed according to custom before You came.
But when You came, O Holy One,
she conceived outside of nature
and was a virgin when she gave birth to You
in a most holy fashion.

With You Mary underwent all that married women undergo:
conception, but without intercourse;
her breasts filled with milk, but against nature's pattern.
You made her, the thirsty earth,
all of a sudden into a fountain of milk!

The Mighty One entered, and put on insecurity from her womb;
the Provisioner of all entered, and experienced hunger;
He who gives drink to all entered, and experienced thirst.
Naked and stripped there came forth from her, He who clothes all.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 34 (33) I will bless the Lord at all times....

Response

Look towards Him and be radiant,
let not Your face be abashed.
The poor call on the Lord and He hears them,
He rescues them from all their distress.

Blessed are you, Francis Xavier, great among our fathers,
who suffered joyfully for the name of Jesus.
As you confessed Him by your life,
He will acknowledge you at the end of time.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise....to Him who by His saving Cross cast down the Rebel and made him to be trampled on by those who walk in His footsteps, and by His living words and wondrous deeds which He manifested in His humility, armed His servants against all the strength of the Crafty One. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Christ our God, in whose sight the death of Your saints is precious and in whose eyes the memory of Your friends is honoured, You willed that the noble athlete and valiant labourer and obedient servant of Your majesty, Francis Xavier, should depart today from this world to the world of joy. He bowed his neck from the time of his youth and took Your gentle yoke upon him, as he was wounded by the arrow of Your love and captured by Your friendship. He took up his cross and followed You...and endured hunger and thirst, cold, heat and sickness, and he laboured wonderfully in the spiritual vineyard planted by Your disciples....

Therefore, today the Churches celebrate his memory with the voice of praise while they pray that You will save them from the forces of evil and strengthen them to be true witnesses of Your Gospel of Life and of the salvation and peace for which You took flesh from the Virgin Mary. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Who is able to recount your deeds, confessor of the truth,
your works for the Gospel for which you received a crown?

How you pleased Christ from the days of your youth
in vigils and fasting and prayer with tears,
in true faith and hope and love!
For these He has given you
the life which does not pass away, halleluia, halleluia.

How lovely the day of your remembrance, Saint Francis Xavier.
Christ magnified you for your life spent in His service.
Your death was life, and glorious to God
who honours the death of His servants.
With an open face you will go to meet your Lord.
May we also be worthy to rejoice with you
in the abode of glory, halleluia, halleluia.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

You wove a crown by your labours, chosen blessed one,
and you chiselled gems: vigil with fasting.
You put in your lamp the oil of frugality
and you watched for the Bridegroom when He comes.
Blessed are you, chosen one, for He called you:
Come to me, good and faithful servant
who kept my commandments, halleluia, halleluia.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Your body is a crown of great beauty.
In it we see fasting, a beautiful gem,
and prayer, a most precious pearl, and love full of faith.
Blessed are you, good one who bore the Lord's yoke,
and He took you to Himself, halleluia, halleluia.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord..P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us!

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
by the prayer of Saint Francis Xavier.

By the prayer of all those who loved You so much
pardon us and be gracious to the whole world.

Your crucifixion, O our Saviour,
was the end of Your bodily life;
grant us to accept bodily suffering
as a purification for the life of the Spirit.

May Your resurrection, O Jesus,
make to grow in us the spiritual being.
And may the contemplation of Your mysteries
lead us to become more and more like You.

Your divine counsels, O our Saviour,
fashion the world spiritually.
Make us eagerly surrender ourselves,
for the new creation, the new humanity.

Lord, do not deny to our souls,
the manifestation of Your Holy Spirit.
Do not withdraw from our members
the gentle warmth of Your grace.

Glory to the Father who chose Francis Xavier from the beginning.
Adoration to the Son who taught him how to suffer for His name.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who filled his heart with joy.
And on us by your prayers, God's love and graciousness.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

DECEMBER 8

The Conception of the Mother of God[20] Immaculate

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Opening Prayer

Lord God, open our lips that we may praise You on this sublime day when we rejoice at the Holy Conception of Mary, the Mother of Your Word, whom You preserved free from all stain and grant that our praises may be acceptable to You, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 97 (96) The Lord is king, let earth rejoice....

Response

Hate evil you who love the Lord.
He protects the lives of His people.
He who rescues them from the power of the wicked
preserved His Mother from all stain.

Light shines on the righteous and gladness on the good.
All you that seek the Kingdom of God
rejoice in the Lord and offer praise to Him
because of the wonders He has done.

O You who have faith, this is the beloved and glorious festival
when the Virgin Mary, the Daughter of David, was conceived.
She who became the Mother of God was conceived free from every stain
and filled with the holiness of the God of our fathers.

Beloved, let us array ourselves in purity like the wise virgins.
Let us enter into the presence of the Daughter of the King.
We shall be filled with wonder at her beauty,
as she stands at the right hand of the God of our fathers.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us....P.3

Response

How fair and desirable and glorious is this day,
when we celebrate the Conception of the Virgin Mary,
the feast that drives away all sadness from our hearts.
Today joy reigns; today gladness is spread abroad.

Today the Holy Church is happy and gloriously arrayed.
She adorns her children with every kind of beauty
that they may honour Mary, the Mother of her Bridegroom,
and offer gifts of praise and exaltation to her.

Today, in every place and in every way, new cries are heard:
Blessed are you, Mary! Men, young and old,
with the priests, proclaim you blessed.
The women also with pure voices cry: Blessed are you!

Blessed are you! sounds in the clear air,
from lips which have never spoken.
The virgins cry and sing with purity.
The little ones accompany them to honour the Mother of their Lord.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.. to the Father who chose Mary from the beginning and made her His beloved daughter. Praise to the Son who was pleased that she should become His Mother, and to the Holy Spirit who hallowed her when He created her and made her His glorious bride. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening.

We praise You, God the Father, and we give thanks for Your grace because of the incomprehensible love which You showed to us in the Incarnation of Your Beloved Son. We also thank You because of the unspeakable grace which You showed to our weak race when You chose from it the Blessed Virgin Mary, and bestowed on her the riches of Your gifts, and adorned her with beauty and holiness from the time when You created her, and made her our pride and joy and consolation. We all who

believe that she became the Mother of God call her blessed while we say: Blessed are you, Mary, whom your Lord chose from all generations of the earth before you were conceived in the womb to pour out His graces upon you. Blessed are you who were counted worthy to receive from your Creator what no one among creatures ever received before you and none will receive after you in heaven or on earth. Blessed are you who were exalted in your virginity above all virgins and surpassed in your love and holiness all the saints, lovers of God and people. Blessed are you whose beauty excels all beauty and comeliness, in heaven and on earth, and whose glory dazzles the minds of all friends of God... How fair and lovely is the crown which the Holy Trinity placed upon your head, and by it made you queen of all creatures!

Therefore, we who are counted worthy of the joy of celebrating your Immaculate Conception, O Virgin full of all beauty, invite all creatures today to be glad with us. And we give thanks to Him who chose you and filled you with holiness. We praise Him, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The time being accomplished and salvation being near,
the Creator made a sign to the angel to bring to people on earth
the good news of the renovation of their race
by the Son of God made flesh:
Mortals, there is good news for you,
the young maiden who is to remove the curse of Eve
and to be the instrument of your salvation has been chosen.

Adam and Eve exult together with joy
because the poison spread over the earth by them,
which all their children must drink has not been drunk by Mary.
As he was to bring them the Tree of Life, it was not fitting
that she should be soiled either in her soul or in her body,
she the ship who had been chosen to carry in her womb the Son of God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

When the time came that Hanna, the blessed and aged woman,
should conceive and became the mother of the Mother of the Lord
the most High gave orders to His angels to bind Satan

with chains of iron to keep him away.
The Lord Himself commanded him:
Do not approach this child whom I have chosen for My dwelling.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed are You Christ who chose Mary, the Daughter of David,
among all the peoples of the earth and took from her a body.
Although You were God, it was as a man subject to suffering
that You were manifested on earth. Glory to You
who for us abased Your majesty, and who exalt and magnify
the memory of Your Mother in the four quarters of the earth.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Lord God accept this service which we offer to You on this festival
of the pure virgin whom You chose among all creatures,
as You found her purity and her desire for You,
an acceptable sacrifice during all her earthly life.

Grant that in our whole life we may resemble her
by hearing Your word and keeping it,
so that the fragrance of our good deeds
may rise into Your presence today and always and for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O blessed one,
may your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayers and be gracious to all.

You who are full of graciousness
pray and beseech Him who is all graciousness
to be gracious to all who are in distress.

Peace be with you, Mary, peace be with you,
cry today with joy the children of the Church with Gabriel.
May the peace be with you in the heights
and peace be with you on earth. May peace be with you from all.
Blessed are you who have been so exalted by the Lord of all.

After the name of Jesus, O Virgin Mary,
your name is more beautiful than any other name.
All those who believe find it fair and lovely.
In your name, Mary, your Well-beloved Son delights.
In your name we approach God in confidence.

Mary you are radiant with the light and splendour of grace,
the grace of the Lord of all chose you among all.
It is no small part of the Lord's grace which is given to you
but all the treasures of His riches and without measure.

Glory to the Father who made Mary His child,
adoration to the Son who willed that she should be His mother,
thanksgiving to the Spirit who crowned her and made her His bride,
one Lord by whom the world exists.

By the prayer of her who carried You for nine months.

Son of God, make all harm and evil to pass far from us.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Lord lowers the heavens
and descends to make His dwelling on earth.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Lord created me at the beginning of His works.
Alone I was fashioned in times long past,
at the beginning, long before earth itself.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 1:46-55 Mary's song of thanksgiving.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us all stand well and answer together with gladness, exultation and great rejoicing of the heart: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who when You willed to dwell with us on earth chose Mary to be the temple of Your glory and preserved her from all evil, may we also, as children of God, be set free from all fetters of sin, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who took flesh from her who offered herself to Your Father as the Lord's servant while You, here on earth, were known Yourself as the servant of God, impress on Your Churches that they are called not to rule or dominate but, like You, to serve Your people, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N..Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N..our Metropolitan Archbishop, N..our Bishop, N..our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among her people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Word of God who fashioned the Virgin Mary by making her share beforehand the salvation which You would bring by Your passion, death and resurrection of the body You were to take from her, and preserving her from any stain of the sin of our forefathers, make us all, and the whole creation, share in Your victory over sin and death, O Saviour of the world, and we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you ...P.7

Response

In Your graciousness, Lord of all, give us the wakefulness
of the angels, that we may sing praise to You with them,
and offer thanksgiving to You for Your goodness,
on the day of Your coming.

In Your graciousness, Lord of all,
give us the wakefulness of the wise and earnest virgins,
that with them we may enter Your wedding feast
and sing praise to You on the day of Your coming.

O Lord, give us the right understanding of Your law of love,
that while we meditate and ponder over it
we may find You and offer fitting praise to You,
on this glorious feast of Your Mother.

You know the weakness of our race, Lord,
strengthen us to laud and exalt fittingly
the Conception of Your Mother
who is summoning us today to her festival.

May our prayers be propitiation and reconciliation with You.
May our petitions persuade You and obtain Your favour.
Incline Your ear to our supplications
that we may praise You at all times.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 24 (23) The Lord's is the earth and its fullness...

Response

Mary, Holy Virgin, Mother of God,
ask your only Son
to make peace reign in the creation.

Behold, Wakeful Ones and angels rejoice
on the day of the remembrance of the Virgin Mary
who gave birth to the Son of God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Father who when He chose Mary to be the Mother of His Son created her in all purity and beauty, free from all stain of sin and from all evil. Praise to the Son who was pleased that she should become His Mother, and to the Holy Spirit who hallowed her when she was created. To the three in one all glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We praise You Hidden and Silent One, and we give thanks for Your grace because of Your incomprehensible love revealed to our parents in the garden of Eden, when You gave them the first glimmer of salvation by warning the Serpent, the Adversary, that You would henceforth put enmity between him and the woman, between his brood and her offspring and that it would strike his head. We rejoice because from that day Mary was in Your mind as the Mother of the new creation, for through her the enemy who defeated our first parents would be defeated. We worship and we give thanks and with John the Seer of Patmos we say: The sovereignty of the world has passed to our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever. And he saw a great sign in heaven, a woman adorned with the sun, standing on the moon and with a crown of twelve stars on her head.

Therefore, we also who believe declare her blessed and we beg and beseech her intercession for us with God who was born from her, that

He may shed His mercy and compassion on the whole world, and make us worthy by His grace always to give thanks for His salvation, and to praise Him, and His Father and His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

With the Conception of Mary things of old
were made to disappear with great wonder.
A new hope dawned on us from this earth,
and Mary was its herald.

Adam by his folly had cast a heavy yoke
on the necks of the whole race of humankind.
But it could not be placed on Mary
who was to be the Mother of Adam's Saviour.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Mary all-glorious, offer praise to Christ who saved you
from the bondage of sin which we all inherited from Adam.
He set us free after finding us in the fetters of sin
but saved you before it could come near to you.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

One day as I was passing through Bethlehem,
I saw Mary and she was singing to her son:
All generations will count me blessed, my Lord,
so wonderfully have You dealt with me, O Mighty One.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 46 (45) God is for us a refuge and strength...

Response

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord.
The Fiery Ones hallow with their wings

Him whom the Holy Virgin contained.
To Him whom the Winged Creatures bless with their wings
the blessed among all women gave birth.
Him whom the angels serve with trembling
she carried in the creation, in the house of the earthly ones.
It is He whom the sons of earth adore
as well as the companies of the heavenly ones.
O Mother of God, to you our praise in the creation.

It is you, O full of grace, Holy Virgin,
whom Moses represented by the bush which was not burnt up,
for you received the Devouring Fire of the Divinity
within your womb and you were not consumed by it.
It is you whom Elijah signified by the light cloud,
for you bore and carried the Lord God.
It is you, we know, who are our hope and our refuge.
The whole creation magnifies you, so glorious by your purity.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Father, Source of all life and goodness, who when He predestined Mary to give to the world that very life which renews all things, enriched her by His Holy Spirit with all the gifts befitting her call. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We praise Your wisdom, Lord God, and Your supreme goodness that when the fullness of time had come, the time to send Your Son born of a woman to make us His brothers and Your sons by adoption, You created Mary whose mission in the Economy of Salvation had been depicted of old by the prophets in images and mysterious sayings. She is the woman whose victory over the Serpent was promised to our first parents after the fall in the garden. She is the virgin who was to conceive and bear a son whose name is called Emmanuel. We praise her, the all holy one, free from all stain of sin, fashioned by the Holy Spirit to be the new Eve, Mother of Life, by providing the flesh to Him who brings about the new creation. Adorned from the first instant of her conception to bear Him who shines with the brightness of God's glory she was rightly greeted by the angel, O Full of Grace.

Therefore we beseech You, through the intercession of her who was the first seed of the Church on earth and in whom the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she will be without spot or wrinkle, that all the nations of the human family may be happily gathered together in peace and harmony into one people of God for Your glory, God of love and compassion, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Who can find words to describe the diadem
placed on your head, O Virgin Mary, full of all beauty,
a crown with twelve stars and shining pearls,
set in by the Blessed Lord Most High?

In the garden of the Holy Church
Mary, the daughter of David, is the rose full of beauty
with the most sweet fragrance, the good odour of Christ.
Glory to Him who planted it to adorn the Church.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Innocent Dove so loved by God,
to whom you brought back the true olive branch.
He saved you from all the deceits of the hawk.
There is only one like My Dove, she is perfect.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

There are two covenants, the old and the new.
In the old, Eve was led astray by the Evil One.
In the new, Mary's offspring defeats the Adversary,
and gives victory to her spiritual children.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens..P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O blessed one,
may your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayers and be gracious to all.

You who are full of graciousness
pray and beseech Him who is all graciousness
to be gracious to all who are in distress.

Our Lord is with you, O daughter of the poor,
He who fashioned heaven and earth.
All His glory and all His power are with you
all His wisdom, all His compassion are seen in you admirably.

He was with you before He chose you to put on His manhood.
With you when your soul awakened in your mother's womb.
How could the Evil One, the Adversary, ever venture
to draw near to you and hold you in his snares?

Before you a multitude of virgins gathered great riches
but you are exalted above them all by your grace.
None can compare with you,
neither Esther's beauty nor Judith's strength,
nor the attainments of all the prophets, apostles and martyrs.

Glory to the Father who made Mary His beloved daughter.
Adoration to the Son who willed that she should be His Mother.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who loved her and crowned her,
and made her His bride. One Lord by whom the world exists.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

DECEMBER 20

Ignatius the Fiery[21]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord our God, to honour with faith and love the day of the remembrance of Your athlete, Ignatius the Fiery, the true pastor who cheerfully descended in the arena of suffering to seal his love for You by the libation of his blood. May we imitate his courage and be helped by his prayer and be worthy of the crown which You gave him in the other world whose joys never come to an end, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 103 (102) My soul, give thanks to the Lord...

Response

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
my whole being, bless His holy name.
It is He who redeems our lives from death
and crowns us with love and compassion.

What I long for is the bread of God
which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the son of David.
And for drink, I long for His blood
which is love incorruptible.

Evening Psalms We call up on You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Beloved, implore Christ that I may be a martyr for God.
It is He whom I seek, who died for us.
It is He for whom I long, who is risen for us.
Now is the moment when I shall be born.

Your love, O Ignatius, was stronger than death,
a divine passion, unflinching before all torments.
It shone like a blazing fire,
a flame which no waters can quench, no flood can sweep away.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.. Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Good Shepherd who gave up His life to death for the sake of His flock. When He returned victorious after three days from the battle with the Robber, He entrusted it to Peter and his companions to tend it according to His will, that they might commit it in true faith to those who follow in their footsteps and tend it like them, guiding it by the waters of truth and faithfulness. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Christ our God, the One Beloved Son of the Eternal Father, High Priest and Good Shepherd who said in Your life-giving Gospel, the good shepherd lays down his life for his flock, Your servant Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, whose memory we keep today with joy meditating upon it, was inflamed with heavenly zeal. When the emperor oppressing the Christian people ordered that he should be taken to Rome in chains where he would be made food for the wild beasts to give pleasure to the people, Ignatius cried out with joy: I thank You, Lord, because You have counted me worthy of the chains of Your apostles Peter and Paul! O the Strength of his faith in You, Lord! O the wonder of divine love! You are glorious and exalted among Your saints, they are the pride of the human family.

Therefore, we beseech You, Lord, by the prayers of Ignatius, the teacher of Your Gospel and witness of Your love, strengthen us, that like him we may proclaim Your faith, and glory in Your name with that fearlessness which comes from clinging to Your truth. May we show it forth by the beauty of our lives and by prompting one another in Your love and the love for all people, until we come to the fulfilment of the hope of Your saints, the fair crown of the champions of the faith. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn of Ignatius *From his Letter to the Romans*

Forgive me, beloved, forgive me,
do not be unreasonably anxious about me.
Let me become pasture for the wild beasts.
Through them it is given to me to find God.

As God's wheat, I am to be ground by the teeth of wild beasts
to become the immaculate bread of Christ.
Make much of them, that they may be my tomb,
that they may leave nothing of my body behind.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

It is then that I shall be truly Christ's disciple,
when the world no longer sees even my body.
Offer prayers to Christ for me,
that I may be counted worthy to be a victim for God.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Forgive me if I tell you what my preference is:
fire, the cross, at close quarters with the beasts.
Let the worst torments fall upon me,
provided that I possess Jesus Christ.

O our Saviour, the dead who received Your body at the table of life
and who drank Your precious blood from the chalice of salvation,
raise them up from the grave without corruption
and clothe them in glory, those who have hoped in You.

Prayer of Incense

Lord God, our High Priest, Jesus Christ,
in Your goodness You willed to entrust
the keys of the Kingdom to children of flesh.

Accept this incense which we present to You,
in commemoration of Ignatius, the martyr,
great among our teachers and chief in Your Holy Church,
with the spiritual sacrifice which we offer to You, on his feast,
and by it forgive the sins of Your flock.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O Ignatius the Fiery,
may the Lord hear your prayer,
and kindle in our hearts the flame of perfect love.

By your prayer, O Ignatius, glorious among all martyrs,
may the Lord prompt us to seek Him fearlessly
and to find Him in witnessing to His love.

What tongue is able to speak of your spiritual beauty?
Your words and your life are shining like the sun.
The Churches and the creation are enlightened by them,
for they make known Him who is the Light of the world.

I am longing for death, to reach the fulness of life.
My earthly passions have been crucified:
no desire, no burning for earthly things is left in me,
but a living water which murmurs, come to the Father!

Beloved, pray for me that I may come through.
Do not hinder me from living, by offering myself to death.
Let me receive the pure light by imitating the passion of God.
It is then that I shall be truly human.

Ignatius, you are a fountain of life-giving water.
All who come near and drink from it obtain life.
Your remembrance is a burning and fragrant incense
spread throughout the Churches. Blessed is He who chose you.

Glory to the Father who chose Ignatius from the beginning.
Adoration to the Son who magnifies the day of his remembrance.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who crowned him with glory.
By his prayer may God be gracious to all. Amen. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
God put a crown of glory on his head,

a crown that lasts for ever.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Ignatius, the beloved of God,
gave his life for the love of Christ.
Man can have no greater love,
that to lay down his life for his friend.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 10:9-15 The Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us all stand well and together answer with joy and thanksgiving: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who in the teachings and in the life of Your servant Ignatius revealed the intensity of human love for God in imitation of You the Saviour who gave Your life for us, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who raised up for us a living and breathing pillar of very high perfection and a model of divine philosophy in the person of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, martyred in Rome, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who made streams of life-giving water to flow from the spiritual breast of Ignatius, the teacher of truth and love, to quench the thirst of the sheep of Your mystical flock, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Make us, Lord, imitators of Ignatius, in his ardent love and his evangelical way of life, that we may be counted worthy of the lot which has fallen to him in everlasting light, by his prayers, Christ our true God, we beseech You and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you ...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
awaken us also, earthly ones, to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed be the Firstborn who showed how great souls can imitate Him.
Ignatius the bishop came forward and walked in His footsteps.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Ignatius became like the Uniquely Beloved Son of God
and, strengthened by the Holy Spirit, conquered impious rulers.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to the Father who chose you, Ignatius the Fiery.
Adoration to the Son who set you on fire with His love.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit, who assisted you
and strengthened you in the trials of the contest

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 2 Why this tumult among nations...

Response

Why are the nations in turmoil?
Why do the peoples hatch useless plots?
They arise, the kings of the earth,
princes plot against the Lord and His anointed.

Neither the attractions of the world
nor the kingdoms here below are any use to me.
It is better to die for Jesus Christ,
than to reign over the four quarters of the earth.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Word who was born of the Father eternally and was born in the flesh of the Virgin Mary. It was for His love that the noble shepherd, Ignatius the Fiery, suffered martyrdom, whose memory we keep today by offering praise to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Whenever we make remembrance of our father Saint Ignatius, O Word of God, we recall Your living words in the Gospel: Whoever believes in Me, streams of life-giving water shall flow out from within him. Such was Ignatius, the true shepherd of the flock entrusted to him, who learned from You to lay down his life for it even unto death. Burning with zeal and love he made his way to God, seeking You and finding You by imitating You, steeped in You and filled with You. May nothing seen or unseen attract me, he prayed, so that I may happily find my way to Jesus Christ. Permit me, beloved, to be an imitator of my suffering God. In the midst of trials and ill treatment he perceives the call of the Father that comes to him from within, like a gentle breeze, as a living water springing from his heart.

Therefore, we beseech You, by the intercession of Your great martyr, O Head of the Martyrs, teach us to seek You like him, and like him also truly make us attain unto God. Prompt us to seek above all that unity in love, in imitation of You to the point of giving our lives for those whom we love and we will offer praise and thanksgiving, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Among the disciples who died for the Son,
Ignatius, by his love, comes closest to his Master.
Forgive me, brethren, do not obstruct my coming to life.
Permit me to be an imitator of my suffering God.

Let us do all things in the faith that He dwells in us.
We are His temple. He is our God within us.
As a land soaked with water
we are steeped in God and filled with Him.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ is our life, our enduring life.
In Him we bear fruit which is imperishable.
To suffer with Him, I endure all things,
if He who became perfect man gives me the strength.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Who can recount your glorious life, O blessed martyr,
who offered yourself to suffer for your Master,
bearing all tortures and afflictions for the love of Him,
giving up your life to death to gain eternal life?

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 11 (10) In the Lord I have taken my refuge...

Response

See how the wicked string their bows.
How they fit their arrows to the strings
to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart.
But he takes refuge in the Lord, and he shall see His face.

Blessed are those who suffer for His name,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Good Shepherd who was slain for the sake of His sheep and who provides for the support of His Churches at all times and raises in them worthy pastors, ready to lay down their lives for their flock. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

Christ our God, Light and Life of Your saints, You made Your servant and true disciple, Ignatius, imitator of Your passion. He left the world to find You by being slain for Your love. He lost his life that he might find You who are the True Life and the Light of the World. With him we pray unceasingly for all people, that from the lives of Your disciples they may learn the true discipleship, and find their way to God. With him also we sing the praises of the Churches and pray that there may be union among them, a union sealed in Your flesh and blood, and made to shine by the Holy Spirit, a union of faith and love, to which nothing is to be preferred.

For this we beseech You, Word of God who humbled Yourself for man's salvation, that like Ignatius we may follow more closely in Your footsteps, that in the face of pride we may remain humble, in the face of anger we may remain gentle, yet fearless. Let us meet reviling not with retaliation but with prayer, proving our brotherliness by our forbearance in imitation of You, our master and brother, always abiding in You, in purity and sobriety, Christ Jesus, in the flesh as well as in the spirit. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Blessed are you, Churches of Christ, one in Him,
when united with Your bishops as the strings to the harp.

In your assemblies resound the words of the Son.
In you is found the medicine of immortality.

Christ placed in you the prophets and the apostles,
those loveable and wonderful saints.
He gave you martyrs, wise teachers and true pastors,
like Ignatius who laid down his life for his Master.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The holy, catholic and apostolic Church honours
the memory of the great fathers, glorious teachers of truth:
Ignatius and Ephrem the deacon, Basil and the two Gregories,
Cyril and the great Isaacs. May their prayers be with us!

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Ignatius the Fiery, intercede for us with Christ,
who today magnifies your memory in the Churches,
that He may make His peace to dwell in the creation,
and He be revealed to every man born in the world.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.. P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Lord, be gracious to us,
by the prayer of Ignatius the Fiery.

By the prayer of him who loved You so much,
pardon us and be gracious to the whole world.

Blessed is the Sun of Righteousness
who dispelled the gloom of untruth,
and brought the truth in full light
by the radiance of His teachings.

Blessed is the Teacher of Truth
who chose for Himself disciples of truth,
and sent them like true athletes,
to wage battle against all untruth.

A true master builder of the faith,
the glorious Ignatius the Fiery
offered himself in sacrifice,
putting his trust in Him who gives life to the dead.

Glory to the Father who put the crown on his head,
and now magnifies the day of his remembrance.
Thanksgiving to His Son, Jesus,
and to the Holy Spirit a shout of joy.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION

DECEMBER 24

The Day Before the Nativity of our Lord [22] Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God our Father, to celebrate joyfully and with earnestness the day before the birth in the flesh of Your Well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. To Him, with You and the Holy Spirit, all praise and glory, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 110 (109) The Lord said to my Lord... *AS HERE BELOW*

The Lord said to my Lord, the King:
Sit here on My right hand
while I make Your enemies Your footstool.

From Jerusalem the Lord will extend Your royal power.
Rule over Your enemies, He says. On the day You fight Your enemies
Your people offer themselves willingly.

At Birth You were endowed with princely gifts.
You were resplendent in holiness.
You have shone with the dew of youth since Your mother bore You.

The Lord made a solemn promise,
He will not take it back; You are a priest for ever,
in the line of succession of Melchizedek.

The Lord is at Your right side...
He will pass judgement on the nations...
He will overcome evil all over the earth.

The King will drink from the stream by the road
and strengthened, He will stand victorious.

Response

All you peoples of the earth,
hear the Good News proclaimed to you:
Tomorrow the Saviour will be born in a cave at Bethlehem.

Rejoice, tomorrow you will see the Divine Light among you
which will enrich you with all good things.
You are blessed for ever, Lord, God of our fathers.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us... p.3

Response

Today the nations are sanctified
and they set out to hear the good tidings,
that He who rules the kings will come tomorrow
to visit the earth in His graciousness.

Tomorrow we shall see goodness:
the Saviour revealed on earth,
the light manifested from on high
that dispels the gloom of untruth.

Tomorrow we will hear amazing things:
the Son of God who is born,
the shepherds who receive the good tidings
and the wise men who behold the star.

Today let us purify ourselves
to go and see in the cave
the Child who comes down from heaven
and is given to us in a body.

The doors of Paradise are opened for all good servants.
Come, beloved, let us be diligent,
that we may be worthy to behold the Saviour.

By justice we are condemned,
but by Your grace, our Lord, we are pardoned.
And so we are not crushed by our sins,
for You alone are without blemish.

Glory to the Heavenly Physician
who came and healed our wounds.
Thanksgiving to the Father who sent Him.
And to the Holy Spirit, a shout of joy.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord...
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

(As on the Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord)

Praise... to the Child of Wonder... P.111

Hymn for the Vigil

Beloved, on this holy day
let us bow down and adore
the Uniquely Beloved Son whom the Father sent
to speak with us in person.

Beloved, let us sing with the Wakeful Ones
to Him who is hidden from generations,
and at the end of time manifested Himself to us
and rejoiced our race by His light.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

This is the day to be sanctified
by fasting and watching and prayer,
to prepare ourselves to go and see
the Saviour lying in a manger.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory to the Exalted One
who descended from the heavenly regions
and became an infant
to save us from ostentation and pride.

For Mary

You strengthened me and I carried You, said Mary.
When I bore You in the cave You showed me Your glory.
Flames surround the little crib
and the Fiery Ones with six wings fly above it.
Command them to raise their wings, O Lord,
that I may enter and bow down and worship You,
and give You pure milk which will be pleasing to Your will.

I have no house on earth, said Mary, nor couch nor bed
I am deprived of all. I will wrap in strips of cloth
Him who is more ancient than all.
I will lay in the manger the Lord of the creation.
His Father has no equal in heaven
and there is none like His Mother on earth.
He is the Lord. I am His handmaid. The Church is His bride.

For Repentance

Judge of judges, at the seat of judgement,
do not fill me with confusion because of my faults
by which I have sinned and offended You.
And if I am not worthy of forgiveness, spare me,
because of Your body and blood which is buried within me.
I have loved You and I have worshipped Your Cross,
and I have been pardoned by Your body and blood.
Be appeased by them and forgive me, O Jesus full of mercy.

O Judge who do not take a bribe from men,
what have I to offer You which You love?
I have heard that the tears of the eyes
are more dear to You than pure gold and precious stones.
Receive, Lord, the tears of my eyes,
and forgive me my offences and my sins.
As Your grace is wont, have pity and be gracious to me.

You who died in Christ do not be grieved, for behold,
the resurrection has come and the day of retribution.
You shall rise from your graves without corruption
and go forth with speed to meet the Son of the King.
You shall be clothed in a garment of glory
and shall sing praise before Him.
Lord who raise up the children of Adam,
forgive and be gracious to all.

Prayer of Incense

Receive, Lord, our prayers and our sighs
which we present to You today on the eve of the birth
of Your Uniquely Beloved Son, the Word,
as You received formerly the sighs of the just men of old
who awaited the renewal of the earth.

And as You received the sighs of Mary and Joseph
who with all fervour prepared themselves
and longed for the sight of You in the days of Your conception,
grant that our joys at Your birth may be
like that of Mary, of Joseph, and the shepherds and the wise men.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

We call upon You, Lord our Lord, come to our help,
hear our supplications and be gracious to Your servants.

Lord, our Lord, Lord of the Wakeful Ones and angels,
hear our supplications and be gracious to all.

Lord, we are longing for forgiveness,
give us tears of repentance while there is time for mercy.
We call on Your compassion we cannot stand without it.
Sea of Compassion pour on Your servants the waters of mercy.

Come and fill the hungry with good things, Lord.
Give them the good measure, pressed down and running over.
Quench the thirst of those who long for Your coming.
Rain down from heaven torrents of love on our dry earth.

You who come to rejoice the poor with Your riches,
taking upon Yourself their weakness and their sins,
create new hearts in us, ready for Your great gifts,
the glory, the honour and the joy of the children of God.

Darkness has fallen on us, now it is night.
You who are light, the Light in whom there is no darkness,
and who called us out of darkness into Your marvellous light,
Light of the world, shine forth and be our light.

Lord our Lord, Lord of the Wakeful Ones and the angels,
hear our supplications and be gracious to Your servants.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
He will grow in the city like a plant of the earth.
His name will be for ever.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
He will descend like dew on the dry earth,
like a gentle rain on tender grass.
He will set free the poor and the oppressed.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Matthew 1:1-17 The Ancestors of Jesus.

Concluding Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ... P.6

Trisagion

Holy are You, O God... P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your glory.
The angels and the children of men cry: Holy! Holy! to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
arouse us, earthly ones, to offer praise with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

By night let us offer praise with the Wakeful Ones
and make a joyful noise with the angels,
to the Wakeful One who never sleeps, nor do His servants sleep.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Come, beloved, let us prepare ourselves,
with watching and fasting and prayer, to meet the King

who comes to us tomorrow in Bethlehem of Judah.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Beloved, let us sing with the Wakeful Ones:
Glory to God in the highest heaven
and on earth may His peace reign and a good hope for humankind!
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 78 (79): 1-8; 69-72 Give heed my people...

Response

Beloved, let us prepare ourselves beautifully
for the birth of the Son of God.
O Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Come, beloved, let us be diligent
in watching and fasting and prayer with sighs of the heart.
O Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to the whole world.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

(As on the Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord)
Praise... to the Child of Wonder... P.118

Hymn of Saint Peter Chrysologus:

When God saw the world crushed by fear,
He sent forth His love to recall it to Himself.
He sent His grace to prompt the world to come to Him
and His affection to draw it in His embrace.

In calling Abraham and Jacob, Moses and the prophets,
He enkindled the flame of divine love into human hearts,
infusing it in the tender feelings of men,
and they, prompted by the heart, began to long to see God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

If the whole universe cannot hold God,
how could the limited gaze of man contain Him?
Love is not ruled by law, nor by what is possible.
It engenders desire, grows with ardour, claims the impossible.
Let Your face shine upon us that we may be saved.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

What God made on earth in His own image and likeness,
could not remain without finding admission to heaven.
How could we think that God was mistaken
when He came to us, as a true human being?
He took flesh from among us that we might truly see Him.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 80 (79) O shepherd of Israel, hear us...

Response

From the mother-ewe came forth the Shepherd,
that the shepherds might offer worship to His honour.
The Bread of Life is given to us at Bethlehem - house of bread,
from the Daughter of David and, behold, God is with us.
He dispels the darkness and illumines the whole creation.

The Father sent from on high His Beloved Son who willed to be born.
The flaming Fiery Ones were stirred.
The heavenly ones were pleased and they worshipped saying:
Praise Him and exalt Him for ever.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

(As on the Sunday before the Nativity of our Lord)

Praise... to the child of wonder... P.120

Hymn of Nicholas Cabasilas

When God was about to bring salvation to the world,
the Word, the Uniquely Beloved Son offered Himself.
The Virgin responded with faith and dedication
and the Holy Spirit descended and dwelt in her.

Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord, said Mary,
let it be done to me according to your word.
As she spoke, the Word became flesh,
and He dwelt among us and we saw His glory.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As Mary was giving God her word,
the Holy Spirit descended and dwelt in her,
and formed in her that flesh wholly divine.
The One Beloved Son of God became the son of Mary.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The Word of God is conceived at the word of His Mother.
The Creator is fashioned at the word of His creature.
Let there be light, God had said, and there was light.
As the Virgin spoke, the True Light dawned on us.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the Glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord.... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P. 13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

We call upon You, Lord our Lord, come to our help,
hear our supplications and be gracious to all.

Lord, our Lord, Lord of the Wakeful Ones and the angels,
hear our supplications and be gracious to the whole world.

How great a light You are, Son of God, how great a light You are!
You are light shining also in the darkness of Sheol.
The dark shadows of Sheol are illumined by Your rays,
as You manifest Yourself below to the dead.

The sunrise in the morning illumines the high mountains
but Your manifestation enlightens the depths of the earth
and the abysses of Sheol, the dwelling of the dead.
There also You make to dawn the day without evening.

Son, Light, the world that did not know You.
You taught to sing praise on all mornings to Your Godhead.
The earth learnt that it should sing every day to its Creator.
To Him be glory with fair praises and sweet songs.

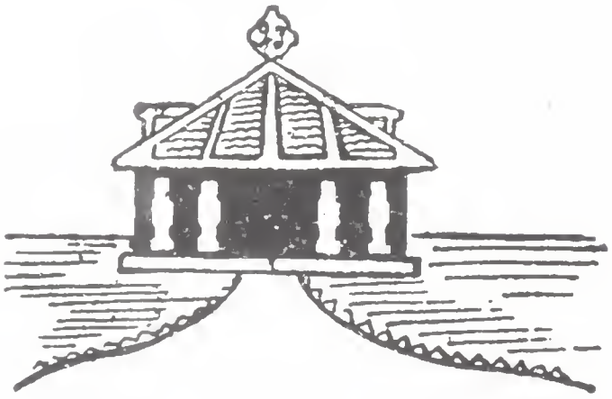
The rational creatures whom You created praise You, our Lord,
and You raise them spiritually for Your glory.
All creatures desired You but they did not perceive You.
To You we offer praise, our Lord,
and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit.

Lord, our Lord, Lord of the Wakeful Ones and the angels,
hear our supplications and be gracious to all.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ.....P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God....P.6

MEDITATION



DECEMBER 25

The Nativity of our Lord in the Flesh[23]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God, that with the Wakeful Ones on high we may offer adorationas and sing to You pure praises with songs of the Holy Spirit. With the shepherds may we worship You with a true worship, and with the wise men be enlightened by You, and give You glory on this day of Your illustrious birth from the Holy Virgin, our Lord and our God for ever. Amen.

Psalm 110 (109) The Lord said to my Lord... *AS HERE BELOW*

The Lord said to my Lord, the King:
Sit here at My right hand
while I make Your enemies Your footstool.

From Jerusalem the Lord will extend Your royal power.
Rule over Your enemies, He says, on the day You fight Your enemies
Your people offer themselves willingly.

At birth You were endowed with princely gifts.
You were resplendent in holiness.
You have shone with the dew of youth since Your mother bore You.

The Lord made a solemn promise,
He will not take it back: You are a priest for ever,
in the line of succession to Melchizedek.

The Lord is at Your right side.....
He will pass judgement on the nations...
He will overcome evil all over the earth.

The King will drink from the stream by the road,
and, strengthened, He will stand victorious.

Response

The shepherds who were out in the fields keeping watch,
were found worthy of the bright and glorious vision.
The glory of the Lord shone over them while the angel said:
Rejoice today and sing praise because to you is born a Saviour.
You are blessed, Lord, God of our fathers.

Straightway with the word of the Wakeful One,
there appeared a company of heavenly powers chanting:
Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth calm, peace and good hope for all people,
because in the centre of the world has appeared for us
Christ, the God of our fathers and Lord of the whole creation.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

Christ is born in Bethlehem.
From the East come the wise men to honour Him,
asking and saying: Where is born the King
to whom we have come to bow down and adore Him?

Mary bears Christ on her knees,
nursing with her milk Him who gives food to all creatures.
She wraps Him up in strips of cloth and lays Him in a manger.
And the Wakeful Ones and the angels cry to Him, Holy! Holy!

The shepherds return to Bethlehem
and find there a newborn child wrapped up in strips of cloth,
and a company of angels crying and singing:
Behold the King, let us bow down and adore Him.

Christ is born from eternity in the heart of Him who begot Him
from everlasting and without change.
At the end of time He came and took flesh from the Virgin Mary.
Come, let us bow down and adore Him.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.. to the Eternal Child who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned and enclosed in the flesh which He made and came forth from the Mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

To You be praise and thanksgiving, Eternal Son who had no beginning, Lord of lights who came forth from the womb like the sun and gave light to all the creation by the appearance of Your brightness. You who nourish infants in the womb became an infant. You who are before all creatures and worlds became a son of David at the end of time. You who send the dew and the rain on the earth were nourished by the drops of milk from a daughter of David. By Your power You established the mountains and today You dwell in a cave. By Your might You uphold the vault of heaven and a young maiden carries You in her arms. You who dwell in the splendour of power are humbly wrapped up in strips of cloth. You who are extolled by the hallowing of the Fiery Ones are carried in the arms of Mary and lulled by the songs of a daughter of David. You who by a gesture, give motion to all creatures, crawl on the ground at Bethlehem like a little child. While we meditate on the wonders which You have done for our salvation, and consider Your incarnation for our sake, we are filled with wonder and say: You are a God of Wonder who became man without change in Your divine nature. Wonderful are You who dwelt in a cave while heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Wonderful are You who by Your taking flesh reconciled Your Father with Your creation and sowed peace and calm in the world.

Therefore, we beseech You on this day of Your glorious birth from the Virgin Mary, that You will give us true knowledge concerning Your incarnation for our sake and a right understanding in regard to Your taking flesh for our salvation. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Who shall declare Your mighty deeds?

What wonder that God in person should descend
and become incarnate of Mary.
He for whom the heavens are too narrow
made Himself a child enclosed in the womb.
He was born in the way of flesh and all wrapped up,
He before whom the angels tremble.
Glory to Him who on the day of His birth
gives great honour to His Church.

He who is before the ages

John declares: In the beginning was the Word.
His existence has no beginning, His mystery has no end.
He lowered Himself and took a body as His garment
and delivered the world from untruth.
Glory to Him who is infinite, whose power cannot be fathomed.
On high and below and everywhere, He cannot be seized by thought.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Born in the splendour of holiness and hidden with His Father
today He is born in a cave, He who exists from the beginning.
He allows Himself to be wrapped up in strips of cloth,
while the heavens and the earth are full of His praise.
Glory to God on high and on earth peace and calm
and good hope with light and life to every creatures.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The angels in the heights, the creatures of fire and spirit,
fly down to the cave of Bethlehem at the birth of Christ.
They bring good news to the shepherds: Today in the city of David
is born the Saviour who is the Lord our God.
Sing glory to Him in the heights,
and below on the earth good hope to mortals, the children of men.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Praise to You, Christ, Incense of Reconciliation,
whose fragrance has spread all over the world,
and the East was moved to honour You with spices.
Thanksgiving to You, Fair Plant, which grew up
and came forth from the thirsty earth of Mary.
The dead breathed it and they came to life.

Bless, Lord, this incense which we offer to You,
that when the sweet scent of Your grace breathes upon us,
we may thank and adore You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia, let us say, halleluia,
as the shepherds said, halleluia, at Bethlehem.
For the Word of God became flesh.

Sing, sing, sing, let us sing halleluia,
as the shepherds sang, halleluia, at Bethlehem.
Our Saviour is born.

You who are wise, come and see
the newborn Child wrapped up in strips of cloth.
Consider that all the creation hangs upon His command.
Wonder to see Him lying in a manger at Bethlehem
who with His Father rules heaven and earth.

Behold, He who sits on the throne of the heavens,
the Virgin carried in her womb.
He before whom Gabriel and his angels prostrate on their faces,
is cradled in the arms of Mary and on Joseph's lap.

He before whom the Fiery Ones while flying chant their hallowings,
is carried by men and praised by their tongues.
The heavens are too small to contain Him, but He descends on earth
and the womb of Mary is big enough to enclose Him.

We sing praise in hymns of fire at Your birth, O our Saviour.
Children of Adam, offer thanksgiving with all your heart.
Let heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land cry "Glory",
on the day of Your birth which gladdens us. To You be praise.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Lord said to Me: You are My son.
Today I have begotten You.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Praise, honour and exaltation, we offer to Him
who is strong and glorious and mighty in power,
for the joy He gives to His people all over the earth.

As Miriam on the timbrel and the lyre sang: The Lord is God.

Praise, praise, praise, praise and praise Him,
the Mighty God,
who by His birth rejoices the creation.

Sing, sing, sing, sing and sing to Him,
God the Strong, who has come to birth.

Chant, chant, chant, chant and chant to Him,
the Hero, God, who has come to birth.
Truly He is worthy of praise.

John 1:1-17 The Word of Life.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us all stand well and answer with joy and gladness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who by Your birth from the Virgin Mary earned for us the ability to become children of God, not born of the fleshly desire of man but of God's gracious love to be His true offspring, make the glory of the One Beloved Son shine upon this assembly of children of God, that we may radiate Your grace and Your truth, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were seen in the flesh upon earth and who shed Your light on those whose minds were filled with gloom, make us into a people of the light, that we may be the light of the nations, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who came to bring the Good News to the poor, prompt our leaders and rulers to dedicate themselves to the service of the millions of India, strengthen them in their task of putting an end to crying inequalities, by providing dignity of life and freedom to all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Christ our God, that we may be worthy to celebrate this festival of Your birth in the flesh from the Virgin with joy, and worship You with the shepherds, and offer You gifts with the wise men, and with the angels cry and say: Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace and good hope for all people, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... p.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer

O Lord, bless Your people on the day of Your birth, that while they rejoice and are glad and exult, they may keep festival on this day of Your glorious birth from the Virgin, and offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... p.7

Response

With those from on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we offer thanksgiving to You and we praise You, as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

With the shepherds we all worship Your glory, O Lover of Humankind,
and with offerings we bless You and offer thanksgiving.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

On the day of the birth of the Son
heaven and earth rejoice and sing praise
to the Father who sent His Son for our salvation.
Glory to Him, the Creator of all creatures.

Mary who gave Him birth wraps up her son in strips of cloth
and places Him in a manger.
Joseph marvels, and the heavenly companies sing praise.
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

On the day of Your birth
offerings and gifts of honour are made to You.
The shepherds and the wise men of Persia worship Your glory
and the angels sing Your praise.

Praise, glory and adoration with the highest honour
it is good to offer to the Father,
and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one true God, to Him be praise.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 2 Why this tumult among nations...

Response

The Lord said to Me: You are My Son.
It is I who have begotten You this day.
Ask and I shall bequeath You the nations,
and put the ends of the earth in Your possession.

The Wakeful Ones on high rejoice and the angels sing praise
and, behold, the Church and her children sing glory,
on the day of Your birth.
O God, be gracious to all.

Today the angels descend
to announce the wonder to the shepherds:
The Lord Christ is born to you
in the city of David to save Adam and his children.

Blessed are You Hidden Being,
who descended and dwelt in the Virgin,
and today manifested Yourself from her in Bethlehem.
O God, be gracious to all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Holy One, who in the Holy of Holies of His Being is hallowed with His Father and His Holy Spirit, and who hallowed the womb of the Virgin and descended and dwelt in her and was born from her. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration at this time of the Night Vigil...

Who is able to praise Your Saving and Life-giving Incarnation, Christ our God? When You saw the race of us men given over to corruption, You who are the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father entered into the womb of the Holy Virgin, and fulfilled the measure of nine months, and were born of her in the flesh from her by birth as perfect God and perfect man in two natures and one person. You filled the whole creation with joy on the glorious day of Your birth and made the earth again a heaven and joined the angels and the children of men together. The manger in which You were laid was surrounded by angels, who made a joyful sound and said: Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace and tranquillity and good hope to the children of men. Mary, the Blessed Mother, offered praise and adorations with lovely songs to You. Joseph the Just who had brought her from Nazareth in holiness and honour for Your birth, and gave homage to her as to one who has given birth to God, was counted worthy to be called father of Your coming in the flesh, although it was without marriage and partnership.

Therefore, we also Your sinful servants beseech Your graciousness that You will not enter into judgement with us because by Your incarnation You rescued us from the tyranny of the Enemy. Make us worthy of the heavenly glory which is kept for the perfect, that we may offer perpetual praise to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

A star of light appeared in the land of mortals.
It announced to the wise men the birth of the Son.
They carry and bring to Him their true gifts
and offer them to Him in the manger at Bethlehem, with faith.
They see His brightness filling the cave
and behold Him wrapped up in strips of cloth and in fire,
and give glory to God who has visited His creation.

Today Christ the Lord is born at Bethlehem,
the town of David, to save the creation.
The companies of the angels sing joyful praises
and proclaim the glad tidings:
Glory in the highest heaven and peace on earth.
Hosanna in the highest heaven,
and abundance of peace to humankind on the day of His birth.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Jesus, God, the prophets of truth prophesied Your mysteries
by the Holy Spirit, and they announced Your coming.
Isaiah foretold Your conception and David Your birth.
Zechariah Your manifestation and Micah Your rule.
Ezekiel spoke of the brightness of Your chariot
and Daniel concerning the throne of Your majesty.
Blessed are You who came to be conceived
and who were born to save the creation.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Everything about You is wonderful, Son of God.
Wonderful indeed is Your ineffable nativity.
The heavenly companies marvel on the day of Your birth.
Heaven and earth resound with the chants of their assemblies,
and the earthly ones offer gifts to You.
Glory to You, Jesus, God who are not divided.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.. P.8

Psalm 48 (47) The Lord is great and worthy to be praised....

Response

Our Lord is great and worthy to be praised
in the city of our God.
His holy mountain rises in beauty,
the joy of all the earth.

On the day of Your birth, Jesus,
the Church rejoices with her children,
the Wakeful Ones sing glory
and the angels make a joyful noise with their praises.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise...to Him who is rich by nature and yet was wrapped up in strips of cloth. In His compassion He lay in a simple manger, in a little cave, like a poor man. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Lord Christ, the One Beloved Son, Word of the Father, brightness of His glory and image of His Being, You are the Fountainhead of all good things. Your eternal birth is beyond all telling and surpasses the understanding of all creatures, when You freely consented to descend so far to us and inclined the heavens which are full of Your splendour. You descended and became a child on earth for the sake of us children of earth, while You remained God after this birth in time, in a manner which is above all speech and thought and hearing.

We therefore beseech You, Child without beginning who were born for us and were given to us as Son and Saviour, and we prostrate before Your loving kindness that You may not turn our festival into mourning on account of the multitude of our sins. But show to us the joy of Your salvation and gladden us by the brightness of Your glory, like the innocent shepherds at the time of Your birth. Unite us with them that we may be gathered in Your name with the companies of the heavenly ones which celebrated You at that time. Strengthen us that with them we may cry and say: Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth peace

and good hope to the children of men. Again make us fit to be a resting place that is a dwelling for You, as Bethlehem Ephrata was for You and Your parents Joseph and Mary. Feed us with Yourself as with a life-giving bread and sustain our hearts which are weak with hunger by the food of Your word. As in the manger in which You rested and were lulled by Your Mother, so let us carry You upon the altar. May we rejoice and take our pleasure with You and from Your strips of cloth be clothed with a garment of glory, and be guided by the power of an angel as by the star. Thus we will offer You sacrifices of thanksgiving... and acceptable offerings of various kinds, not like the gold and myrrh and incense of the wise men by which mysteries were signified and things to come were shown, but sacrifices of faith and hope in You and of love founded on Your love. While You deliver us here from the Evil One full of deceit who like Herod seeks to destroy our souls, let us return by another way, that of righteousness, far from that of sin by which we entered this world, and through Your divine revelation reach that former place, the Church of the Firstborn, above this world, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

On this day on which the Lord of Adam
is born from the womb of the Virgin Mary,
the Wakeful Ones sing: Peace in heaven
and good hope for the people on earth.
Come, let us adore the Father who sent Him for our salvation
and He made the creation turn away from deceit and untruth.

Moses saw a wonder on the mountain,
fire in the bush and the bush was not burnt up.
By it was signified the Life-giving Son
who dwelt in the womb of flesh, though a devouring fire.
Glory to the Good One who came to fulfil the symbols
which the prophets had announced about Him by the Spirit.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Mary was carrying the Son of God
and opening her mouth she said:

Happy am I who were found worthy to be Your Mother,
O Son, Lord of all, Word of the Father,
it pleased You to lower Yourself
and to be clothed with flesh to save all creatures.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory to You, Son of God who for the children of men
became man and saved Your image which was corrupted
by greedy death and the rule of the demons.
Behold, on the day of Your birth Wakeful Ones and earthly ones together
offer You adoration and they sing praise.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... p.8

Psalm 89 (88): 1-22 I will sing for ever of Your love....

Response

We will sing for ever of Your love, O Lord.
Through all ages we will proclaim Your truth.
It is You who said: My love lasts for ever.
And Your truth is established as the heavens.

To Him who is seated on the throne
and carried by the angels,
the heavenly ones sing: Holy!
And the earthly ones bless Him in His place.

Hymn

Behold, Emmanuel of whom Isaiah had declared
that He would appear from a virgin

and would build up the waste places and restore the ruins,
all creatures give Him glory, halleluia, halleluia.

David, son of Jesse, take up your harp and sing praise to God
who willed to appear from your seed
to raise up the mortal ones,
halleluia, halleluia, the race of Adam.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Let us worship the Father who sent the Uniquely Beloved Son
to save the creation. And He willed to take flesh
from the womb of the Virgin to give life to our death
and restore us to our inheritance, halleluia, halleluia.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory in the highest heaven and peace on earth,
cry out the heavenly ones, joyfully,
at the birth of Him who is the giver of life to all.
They announce hope and joy for the race of Adam,
halleluia, halleluia, for He has saved them from untruth.

MEDITATION

FOURTH WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P. 8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia, let us say halleluia,
as the shepherds said halleluia, at Bethlehem.
The Word of God became flesh.

Sing, sing, sing, let us sing halleluia,
as the shepherds sang, halleluia, at Bethlehem.
Our Saviour is born.

It is wonderful to relate
that the Child who is wrapped up in strips of cloth
is He who fills the whole creation.
But by the way of birth the Word of God
entered the creation as all the children of men.

He who sustains the worlds
sucks a little milk and it suffices Him.
He who is carried by the Winged Creatures
is cradled upon the knees.

The Great One who makes the Fiery Ones tremble
is clothed with flesh; this is the wonder!
He gives the rain
and, behold, He is groping after His mother's breasts,
and yet He is Infinite.

He came to birth and sent a star
so that they might bring Him their gifts in homage.
He came to the temple and the old man Simeon
asked the child to let him go in peace
for he knew it was to Him that he had vowed his life.

Glory to the Father who willed to send the One Beloved Son.
Adoration to the Son born today at Bethlehem.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who prompted the heavenly companies to announce peace and good hope in all quarters.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P.6

DECEMBER 26

Praises of the Mother of God [24]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord, Lord of all, that we may praise the day of the remembrance of Your Blessed Mother Mary with holiness and purity of heart, and with a body free from sin. And as You received from her our human nature may we, through her intercession, bring forth the fruits of our divine sonship, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 46 (45) God is for us a refuge and strength....

Response

Come, consider the works of the Lord,
the astounding things He has done on earth...
Life-giving waters give joy to God's city,
the holy place where the Most High dwells...
Be still and know that I am God,
supreme among the nations, supreme on the earth.

Mother of God, you are a mystical furnace
like that which saved the three children.
You are above all exaltation, because in your pure womb
He renewed and refashioned the whole creation,
He whom all should praise and exalt with glory,
the God of our fathers, Lord of the whole creation.

Mother of the Light, it is you whom Jacob saw
and foretold in a prophetic manner in the ladder.

It is by you who are higher than all exaltation,
and by your grace that we who are on earth
have seen Him and lived with Him, as it pleased Him,
whom all should praise and exalt with glory,
the God of our fathers, Lord of the whole creation.

Jesus is born of the Virgin Mother,
His remembrance is magnified in heaven and on earth,
may He show us His tender love.
Blessed are you Mary, Holy Virgin,
who gave birth in the flesh to the Word of God.
May your prayer be for us a wall of protection.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Glory to Christ who in His mercy was manifested
and came forth from Mary, the Pure and Holy Virgin.
He exalts her memory in heaven and on earth.
All you nations sing His praise on the festival of His Mother.

At all times you are our high refuge and our firm support,
you who are full of beauty.
By the power of your prayers may mercy be shown
to all those who honour the day of your remembrance.

Mother of God, on the day of your festival,
offer to God petitions for all those who venerate you.
Pray the Lord that we may have peace and tranquillity,
so that we may celebrate your festival with joy.

Glory to the Father who chose you, Daughter of David,
and to the Son who appeared from your pure womb,
and to the Holy Spirit who sanctified you.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Holy One who hallowed the holy one who bore You, to the Great One who magnified the Virgin who was His Mother, to the Pure One who purified the Pure Virgin who gave Him suck. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Blessed and Glorious Mother of God, Pure Virgin who received the Most High, you are the glorious tabernacle of the Godhead, the pure temple of the Word of God, the dwelling place of the Maker of all. You are a fountain of blessings and of joy, the bearer of our salvation, the bringer of peace to our race. You are the light and beauty of all the world, the pride and joy of all peoples, the crown and glory of all believers, who were signified by the prophets in a mystery and were prefigured by the generations of old in all allegories. You were the glorious ark of Noah the Just, the pure offering of Melchizedek, priest of God Most High, the blessed seed of Abraham, the field of fragrant smell of Isaac, the ladder of Jacob the Just, the bush that was on fire and was not consumed, the tent of meeting and the ark of Moses. You were the fleece of Gideon, the overflowing cruise of Elijah, the new urn of Elisha, the thirsty earth of Isaiah, the closed door of Ezekiel and the high mountain of Daniel. Rightly do all generations on earth call you blessed and celebrate your festival with rejoicing, and with songs of praise and honour, and exalt Him who came forth from you.

We therefore also weave a crown of praise to you who are glorious above all and high above the world, and we entrust our prayers and petitions to your hands that they may ascend and be mingled with your holy prayers, so that salvation may come and be sent down to us through you from the Uniquely Beloved Son who came forth from you. In all the time of our sojourning may your beloved and glorious festivals be celebrated with spiritual serenity. May they be honoured with fitting beauty. And we will praise and thank your Son with His Father and His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Blessed is Christ who chose you, Mary, Daughter of David,
among all peoples of the creation and took a body from you.
He appeared on earth as a man subject to passion while He was God.
Glory to Him who for our sake so lowered His majesty.
He exalts and honours the memory of His Mother
in the four quarters of the earth.

All creatures exalt you and praise you, Virgin full of grace,
for you brought forth the Son of God, who lowered Himself
to become man and to be incarnate in your pure womb.
Glory to Him who showed Himself as a man to our humanity.
He exalts your remembrance in the Holy Church of believers.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

On the day of the remembrance of Mary, Mother of our Saviour,
heaven and earth rejoice and sing, the Watchers with the people on earth.
The bones of the just exult at the bottom of their graves
and sing praise and thanksgiving
to the Lord who magnifies His Holy Mother.
May her prayers preserve the earth and all its inhabitants.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

On the day of the remembrance of the Pure and Holy Mother,
all creatures rejoice and sing praise
and offer thanksgiving to the Son
who came forth from her womb to deliver Adam and his children.
The Holy Church rejoices and proclaims His Mother blessed.
'Glory to Him who came to save us from the slavery of sin.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

In your memory, Holy Virgin, Mother of God,
we offer prayers and petitions with incense
to the Uniquely Beloved Son who was born of you.

May the Church be protected with all her people.
May her pastors and leaders minister with reverence and holiness;

and all the orders which are in her.
May His graciousness and compassion
be felt up to the ends of the world,
and they will offer praise and thanksgiving for ever.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O blessed one.
May your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayers and be gracious to the whole world.

You who are full of graciousness,
pray and beseech Him who is all graciousness,
to be gracious to all who are in distress.

Blessed are you, Mary, who became the Mother of the Son of God.
Through you are restored those who had fallen
and had been driven out of the house of the Father.
Blessed are you who gave streams of milk from your breasts
to Him who by a simple sign makes the depths of the sea to overflow.

Blessed are you who became a second heaven
in which the Lord rested.
He who breathed the breath of life into the body of Adam,
He who at the beginning laid the pillars of the world,
takes a body from a daughter of David; O the great wonder!

Blessed are you who carried and nursed
and cradled on your knees God mighty for evermore
who carries the earth by His secret power.
Blessed are you who placed your pure lips
on the mouth of Him before whom the Winged Creatures of fire
hide themselves that they may not be consumed.

Glory to the Father who chose the Pure One from among all people.
Adoration to the Son who was the Child of the Virgin.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who chose His bride
and descended and overshadowed her.
By her prayers may He always be gracious to all.

By the prayers of her who bore You for nine months,
Son of God, keep away from us all harm and evil.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The people of the city have brought their presents.
The rich among the people seek Your face:
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The King's daughter is clothed with splendour
but all her beauty is within.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 2:15-20 and 52. The shepherds visit the cave.

Intercessions

As we offer prayers to the Lord let us stand well and answer all together with joy and exultation: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who by Your birth from the Virgin Mary earned for us the ability to become children of God, by the intercession of Your Mother, fulfil in us the mystery of Your divine sonship, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who appeared from the burning bush, that is to say the Holy Virgin who without harm bore the fire of Your divinity, strengthen our faith that we may be transformed by the devouring fire of Your love, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N.... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Christ our God, grant that we may celebrate this festival in praise of Your Mother in purity and holiness, and that Your Church may resound with the companies of the people who walk in the way of perfection, that like Mary we may always commit ourselves with joy to Your word, with a faith which cannot be shaken, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord.... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.... P. 7

Response

With those from on high,
the heads of the angelic powers,
we give thanks to You and we praise You, as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

The Heavenly Bridegroom
magnifies the memory of His Mother in the four quarters of the earth.
By her prayers may He protect His flock
against all adversities and temptations of the Enemy.

O Virgin who were chosen to be Mother of God,
beg and beseech the Uniquely Beloved Son
who came forth from your womb
that by your prayers He may be gracious to us all.

May the memory of the Virgin Mary, the Daughter of David,
be kept in the four quarters of the earth.
May her prayers be a stronghold to us
and we will sing praise to Him who came forth from her purity.

Glory, honour, adoration and highest exaltation
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him our praises at all times.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 45 (44): 2; 11-18 My heart overflows with noble words...

Response

You are the crown of God's works, Mary, Mother of the Saviour,
a precious diadem in the hands of your Lord.
Bride of the Holy Spirit, pure delight of the Most High,
rejoice and exult, for the King desires your beauty.

On the day of the remembrance of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
the Wakeful Ones and the angels rejoice
and the Church and her people sing praise
to the Lord who magnifies her festival in the four quarters.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord....
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Holy One who hallowed the holy one who carried Him, to the Great One who magnified the Virgin who bore Him, to the Pure One who purified the Pure Virgin who gave Him suck. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Who is able to weave a crown of praise worthy of your purity, O Virgin Mary, Mother of God? You are the giver of life to the world. You are the book in which are revealed all the mysteries of the prophets. You are the wondrous ark which contained Him who gives the law to the world. You are the ornament and the pride of the earthly ones, the joy and exultation of the heavenly ones.

Therefore we beseech you, O pride and glory of those above and those below, pray for us to the Lord of the heights who descended and dwelt in you, the Firstborn of the Father, whose Mother you became, the High One who raised you to Himself, that He may raise also now the incense of our prayer to His place and receive our fair requests, that we may celebrate your glorious festival in freedom from all evil, and honour your blessed memory by offering praise and thanksgiving to the Hidden Father who was pleased that you should be the Mother of His Uniquely Beloved Son, to the Adorable Son, who was born from you and preserved you in integrity, and to the Holy Spirit who rested on you and hallowed you, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Holy Virgin, the Power of the Most High came to rest on you
and you brought forth in the flesh the Saviour of the world.
Pray and beseech the Son who was born of you,
that His peace and tranquillity may reign in His Churches.

Bethlehem sings praise, Nazareth gives glory,
on the day of the remembrance of Mary, the Mother of Christ.
In the former He was born, in the latter He grew up.
We praise the love of Him who came to save the world.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to the Strong One who came from the heights to the depths
to dwell in the Virgin Mary and took flesh from her
to save Adam and his people.
And by His manifestation enlightened the four quarters of the world.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

O Virgin Daughter of David, the Lord of the heights dwelt in you
and came forth from you for the salvation of the world.
Pray and beseech Him, your only Son,
that His peace and tranquillity may reign all over the world.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P. 8

Psalm 87(86) On the holy mountain is His city....

Response

On the holy mountain is His city
dearly loved by the Lord.
The Lord loves you more

than all the dwellings of Jacob,
and glorious things are told of you, O true city of God.

Lord and Maker of all,
from age to age You make remembrance of Your Mother,
You exalt and magnify the memory of the Virgin Mary who bore You.
By her prayers make us share in her remembrance
and be gracious to us who have come into Your presence.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them, up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise, to the Power of the Most High who for our salvation inclined Himself and dwelt in the womb of the Virgin Mary and made her a house of refuge for the redeemed who believe. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

What mouth or tongue is able to praise Mary, the Holy Virgin Mother of God? Is not this mystical mountain worthy of wonder from which was cut the Corner-stone which is the Messiah who is before the world? Who would not wonder at the Virgin Mary? She was greater than that chariot which Ezekiel saw. That carried the glory, but Mary carried and bore the Lord of glory and holiness in her arms. She carried and bore the Coal of Fire, the Mystery of the Holy Flesh to which the Fiery Ones dare not approach. Since she is truly the Mother of God, we who are poor and lowly will call her greatly blessed, according to the prophecy which was pronounced concerning her. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to Christ our Saviour who was given to us through her and keeps us safe under the wings of her protection, and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The legions of angels descended by choirs
to listen to the joyful songs of the Daughter of David
when she had given birth to the Lord her God.
She was humming to Him the songs of her heart.
And embracing her infant, she was telling Him:

You blessed me, my Son, when I became Your Mother.
You blessed me when You made me worthy to see Your face.
Henceforth all generations shall call me blessed,
halleluia, because I have given birth to You.

Blessed are you, O Blessed Mother,
who were worthy to carry in your arms
the Fire which Moses saw on Mount Sinai,
and you suckled with your pure milk the Wise Fashioner
who by a gesture makes the drops of rain.
Today your memory is exalted and magnified in the Churches,
halleluia, up to the ends of the world.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The stone which Daniel saw which was not hewn by hands
signified you, O Holy Virgin,
for of you was born in the flesh Christ, the Word of God,
who is the Stone that becomes the Cornerstone.
And you were also that light cloud which Elijah saw,
but in a veiled manner, for you carried in your arms
Him whose majesty is borne upon the chariot of glory.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

With Mary we sing Your greatness, O Lord.
Our hearts rejoice in praising You, her Son and our Saviour,
who looked so tenderly upon Your servant,
humble as she was, and You chose her to be Your Mother.
How blessed is Mary who had faith to believe
that the Lord's promises would be fulfilled in her!
On the day of her commemoration we sing:
Glory to You, O Lord, halleluia,
who saved us by Your birth from Mary.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord..... P. 8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P. 9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... p. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P. 13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O Blessed One.
May your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayers and be gracious to the whole world.

You who are full of graciousness,
pray and beseech Him who is all graciousness,
to be gracious to all who are in distress.

Blessed are you Mary who became Mother of God.
Through you His exiled children are restored to Paradise.
Blessed are you, Virgin, whose breast gave milk to Him
who by a single word makes the depths of the sea to overflow.

On the day of your remembrance, O Holy Virgin,
we offer prayers and petitions to your Son,
Son of the Most High, Firstborn of the Father.
Peoples, tribes and nations proclaim you blessed.

Glory to the Father who chose Mary from all generations.
Adoration to the Son who came forth from her, as it pleased Him.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who descended
to dwell in her and then overshadowed her.
By her prayers may God's graciousness be on us. Amen. Amen.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

DECEMBER 27

The Infants of Bethlehem [25]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord God, Great Lover of Humankind, to celebrate in purity and holiness the memory of the young martyrs, Your friends, who were slain in Bethlehem by the impious Herod because of You. And with them we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 79 (78) O God, the nations have invaded Your land....

Response

O God, the wicked ones have invaded the land of Your birth,
the jealous king searching for You in Bethlehem
slaughters the innocent children,
all those who were born with You in the city of David.

The wise men came with gifts to honour You.
Likewise the children were offered in sacrifice to You.
You are truly blessed for ever, Lord, God of our fathers.

From of old the prophet had seen with the eye of the Spirit
the little children snatched away, slain by the tyrant.
You are truly blessed for ever, Lord, God of our fathers.

You for whom the children of Bethlehem
were put to death by the sword in sacrifice,
be gracious to us and to the whole world, O God.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Today the children of Bethlehem are slain by Herod
for the sake of the Lamb of God.
Rachel is weeping bitterly and sorrowing.
Christ comforts her in the heavenly Kingdom.

O Christ, in whose stead the little children were slain
and became martyrs at the time of Your birth,
strengthen us, Lord, that we may sing praise in remembrance of them.
May their prayers be a stronghold to us.

With the eye of the Holy Spirit the prophet Jeremiah
saw the infants and children slain in Bethlehem,
and he comforted the sorrowing Rachel, saying to her:
There is reward for your sorrow, do not weep for your children.

Christ who were born of the Virgin Mary
and for whose sake infants and children were slain,
by their prayers and those of Your Mother who bore You,
pardon our offences and make Your peace reign among all people.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise.... to the Adorable Child in whose name were slaughtered the innocent children who opened the way to martyrdom; to the Head of the martyrs who crowned with the crown of victory those of His age who offered their blood as a sacrifice to Him and who offered Himself like them. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening.....

Lord our God, full of graciousness and compassion, redeeming Saviour of all, great King of Peace, accomplisher and perfecter of all things, while remaining nearest to the Father's heart You lowered the heavens and descended and became a son of man, according to the Divine Economy, to turn us sinners and wrongdoers from evil to good. You were seen on earth as a man of common stature, but with the wonders You performed You filled the earthly ones and the heavenly ones

with joy. When the shepherds offered You lambs of their flocks they truly made You known as the Great Shepherd who came to seek after the lost sheep. Wise men set out from far away countries and came in search of You to Jerusalem, guided by a star, and found You in the cave at Bethlehem and offered gifts as to their Lord: incense for God, gold for the King and myrrh for Your death. While halting at Jerusalem they stirred up great controversies about the King newly born whom they had come to honour with their presents. The ruling king, the impious Herod, incensed with jealousy, ordered the death of all children in Bethlehem and sent His swordsmen. Thus babies had their heads crushed, infants and small children were slain. Bitter weeping was heard on all sides, mothers weeping over their children, and the wedding feast of the slain Bridegroom was prefigured and made illustrious by the blood of His Young friends.

Therefore, O Judge of judges and rulers who made Yourself nothing for the sake of the race of Adam, reveal Yourself as You did to the shepherds of Bethlehem and the wise men of Persia, to all those who walk in the darkness of sin and grope for their way in the midst of worldly passions. Shed Your light on all and make them experience the warmth of Your love. Show mercy to us and all our departed, and we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Blessed are the children who died in the name of Christ,
innocent and knowing nothing of evil or wrong.
Like them He was offered to Him who rules the kings.
Glory to the Son of God who became an infant of His own will,
and chose the children for martyrdom and crowned them,
and magnified them in the Creation.

Jeremiah, in a vision, saw infants slain for the Son of God who Himself
was pleased to be like any other crawling infant of Bethlehem.
Glory to Him who though heaven and earth are full of His glory,
chose infants as His witnesses and they were killed for His love.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Rejoice, exult and offer praise, Holy Church of believers,
to the Son, the Christ in whose name the infants were slain

by the wicked King Herod for whom is in store the fearful judgement
and for the children, the Kingdom.
After their death, how glorious is their commemoration!

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

You are alive, infants, sons of Bethlehem.
You exchanged death for life, and untruth for truth.
This world is like grass, it is like a day that passes away.
Blessed are you who left your families,
even through the sword and became
the cherished children of the Heavenly Kingdom.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Accept, Lord, this incense which we offer
on this day of the commemoration of the innocent children,
whom You chose to be the friends of the Bridegroom
at Your marriage feast.

Make us imitators of the children who loved You,
and may our lives be offered as a spiritual sacrifice
for the sake of Your holy name,
that we may take our pleasure in Your bridal chamber
offering praise to You, now and always and for ever.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayers be with us, O innocent children,
may your prayers always be with us.
May the Lord hear Your prayers and be gracious to the whole world.

Firstfruits of the martyrs, pray the head of all martyrs
that He may prompt and stir up His people
to be true witnesses to His Gospel.

From Herod went forth a command, with the sword,
to search out the children of the place and kill them.
Terrible was the king's order to put male children to death,
no compassion for the mothers of those who were to be slain.

From the house of Herod the executioners set out to the spot
and shed innocent blood over the place.
They laid hands upon the mothers
and snatched away the fruits which they had borne.

The little one is snatched away by the sword
while grasping the breast of his mother.
His blood mingles with the milk of her who had borne him.
The sword falls upon him in sleep at the side of his mother,
and asleep he enters into the great stillness of death.

The Church offers fair praises,
on the day of the remembrance of the children
whom the impious king put to death.
Instead of the milk they expected, he spatters them with blood.
Let us bow down in awe to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
They have thrown out the bodies of Your servants
to feed the birds of the air.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
They have poured out blood like water.
Let Your compassion, O Lord,
come swiftly to strengthen Your servants.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Matthew 2: 13-18 The slaughter of the infants.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us stand well and answer all together with great earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, whose Gospel the children of Bethlehem proclaimed, not by words of mouth but by the sacrifice of their lives, make us always proclaim by our lives the faith we profess by our mouth, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were seen in the flesh upon earth and You shed Your light on those whose minds are in the dark, be the Light of the world and make us into a people of the light, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N.... our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Christ our God, to celebrate the mysteries of Your birth in the flesh from the Virgin Mary with deep faith, that we may never hear from our neighbours that our lives are unworthy of Your Gospel, but always witness to it, even by laying down our life for You like the children of Bethlehem, and we will say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.... P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is the Infant for whose sake
the infants were killed at Bethlehem by Herod,
the Infant who like them laid down His life in sacrifice.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed are the infants who were like Him
who offered Himself and came to be sacrificed
for all the children of Adam.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

All peoples, races and families give glory to the Son of God
who became an infant for all the children of Adam
and for whose sake the children of Bethlehem were slain.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him be praise, and on us His graciousness.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 48(47) The Lord is great and worthy to be praised....

Response

The kings assembled together,
together they advanced.
They saw; at once they were astounded;
dismayed they fled in fear.

The Virgin brought forth a wonder, God mighty for evermore,
but the seal of her virginity was not broken.
Without knowing partnership she gave milk to the Sustainer.
Hence she sings to Him and says:
You have glorified me and exalted me for ever and ever.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Child of the Father, the Radiance of His Being, who at the end of time came forth from the Virgin Mary without marriage and saved the whole world by His incarnation. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

To You be glory, Firstborn of the martyrs and first among the glorious ones, You who were born divinely, as Lord, from the Father and from the Holy Virgin in truth, without any ostentation. You were born from the Father before the worlds, without mother, and born at the end of time from Your Mother without father. You permitted the little, innocent infants to suffer with constancy at the hand of the cruel and merciless Herod and his swordsmen. His heart filled with jealousy, fearing Your sovereignity he sought to kill You, the Lamb of God. But not knowing when he should proceed as he was awaiting a sign from the wise men, Your Mother Mary with Joseph, carrying You, sought refuge in Egypt. Greatly enraged at this news he sent and killed all the infants and children of Bethlehem mingling their blood with the milk of their

mothers, first martyrs, pure and innocent lambs offered to the Lamb of God by their sharing in His passion.

Therefore we beseech You, True Infant for whose birth the infants were slain, make us all celebrate their festival as is fitting for their martyrdom, and by their prayers raise us up, that we may not feel ashamed in the presence of Your majesty on the day of judgement, and thus share with those who were slain the glory which is kept for them. And together with them and among them we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The infants who were the first-fruits of Your birth
did not labour to enter into the inheritance of the Kingdom,
like all those who confess You to be their Saviour by the Cross
and have their sins forgiven by Your body and Your blood.

Blessed is Your Father who invites the peoples to His Kingdom
and its beginning was with the infants of Bethlehem.
In place of those who did not believe in Your birth,
now the Churches sing praise with the infants.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to You, O Word who became a son of man,
and in whose name the infants of Bethlehem were slain.
Behold, they enjoy the wedding feast that does not pass away.
Blessed is he who magnifies their memory here and there.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The infants killed by Herod at Bethlehem,
are like an offering to Him who rules all kings.
By Your passion and by the death of those You love, O Lord,
make peace and tranquillity reign all over the world.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P. 8

Psalm 95 (94) Come, ring out our joy to the Lord...

Response

Come, let us make a joyful noise to the Lord,
hail the Rock who saves us.
Let us come before Him giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord.

The stone which Daniel saw,
not cut out by the hand of man,
we believe that it is Christ
who was conceived without marriage.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Word Incarnate, the Only Son of the Father who when He was born at Bethlehem and appeared on earth, as a little child, with His mother and Joseph, was compelled to fly into Egypt to escape from the wrath of the jealous and impious king. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil.....

Glory to You Sweet Scent from on high, who created from the earth fair plants and fragrant spices that by Your command they might be tried by fire and offered to Your Godhead as incense of sweet odour. Glory to You, Son of Mary and of the Father on high, for whose sake the little children of Bethlehem were slain, offered as the costly ointment of pure nard with which Mary of Bethany anointed Your feet before Your passion. Glory to You God of spirits and of all flesh in whose eyes the death of Your chosen ones is precious and their memory illustrious.

By their intercession, we beg and beseech You, Lord of all, reveal to all believers and to all men the mystery of human suffering as a sharing in Your own redeeming passion, that we may always suffer, either want

or illness and even the pain of death, as an offering of propitiation for our sins and for the redemption of the world, like the children of Bethlehem who while sharing in Your passion were made partakers of Your glory now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

As we were passing through the city of Bethlehem in Judah
we heard the wailing and weeping of the mothers,
and we asked them why they were lamenting.
They said: Rachel is weeping over her children, halleluia,
for Herod the cruel King has slaughtered them.

Blessed are you, infants, who at your birth
offered your necks to be put to death like your Lord.
On the day of the resurrection He will call you and say:
Come to the wedding feast, halleluia, halleluia.
Inherit the Kingdom and enjoy the bliss that does not pass away.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The people of Bethlehem were the first to bring their presents
to the King born of the Daughter of David.
They saw the wise men who had come from Persia to make offerings,
halleluia, halleluia, to the Child who was seen in Bethlehem
and their gifts were like Bethlehem's infants.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Herod killed the infants of Bethlehem
because You were born, O Saviour of the world.
Woe to him who was so cruel to the children and their mothers.
Blessings to those who became sacrificial offerings to God,
halleluia, halleluia. By their prayers, our Lord,
may Your graciousness be upon us.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord.... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us by the prayers of the innocent children.

By their prayers and supplications
pardon us and be gracious to the whole world.

Today what the Prophet Jeremiah had said comes true:
Rachel is crying for her children
and she refuses to be comforted
for Herod iniquitously killed them, out of envy.

Which is the heart that would not suffer,
which is the eye that would not cry, seeing what happened in Judah,
by the doing of the wicked King who killed all infants and children
in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood?

Our Lord, be gracious to us by the prayers of the innocent children.

By their prayers and supplications
pardon us and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Ferial Days after the Nativity
1st, 4th and 7th Day [26]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P. 1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God, that with the Wakeful Ones on high we may offer adorations and sing to You pure praises with songs of the Holy Spirit. Like the shepherds may we worship You with a true worship. And like the wisemen may we be enlightened by You and give You glory, on this day of Your glorious birth from the Holy Virgin, our Lord and our God for ever. Amen.

Psalm 45 (44) My heart overflows with noble words....

Response

To the Eternal Child born in time
we offer the song we have made:
You are the fairest of the children of men.

On the day of Your Holy Nativity
the Wakeful Ones and the angels on high rejoice
and here below the earthly ones exult.

O our Saviour, on the day of Your Holy Nativity
the Churches rejoice and exult
and their people sing praise.

O Word, the Uniquely Beloved Son of God,
blessed is Your birth from the Virgin
for the salvation of Adam.

Glory to the Father, our Creator.
Adoration to the Son, our Saviour.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit, our Sanctifier.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

A star announced the Good Tidings to the wisemen in Persia.
They took presents from their place to offer to the Child.
They found Him with Mary, His Mother,
and opening their treasures, they presented their gifts.

The wise men honour Him with their presents, but the shepherds
offer Him gifts of praise, while the Wakeful Ones and the angels,
with wonder, sing halleluiahs to God who is born in the flesh.
Come, let us bow down and adore Him.

The Fiery Ones hallow Him with their threefold hallowings.
The Wakeful Ones and the angels cry: Blessed be His glory.
And the people on earth bow down and adore Him, crying out:
Come, let us bow down and adore Him.

How beautiful the praises sung by the Wakeful Ones from on high
in the cave at Bethlehem! Mary is filled with wonder
and Joseph marvels, as the Son is given glory
by the mouths of the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.

Let us offer praise to the Eternal Father,
and adoration to the Son who saved us by His Cross.
Let us offer thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit and be faithful to Him.
One God, to Him be praise at all times.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Eternal Child who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made, and sprang forth from the Mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

To You be praise and thanksgiving, Firstborn of the Father, Son of Mary, the daughter of David. You who nourish infants in the womb became an infant. You who are before all creatures and worlds became a son of David at the end of time. You who send the dew and the rain on the earth were nourished by the drops of milk from a daughter of man. You who dwell in the splendour of power are humbly wrapped up like a baby. By Your power You established the mountains, yet You make Your home in a cave. You are extolled by the hallowing of the Fiery Ones yet You are carried in the arms of Mary and lulled by her songs. While we meditate on the marvels which You have done for our salvation and when we consider Your incarnation for our sake, we are filled with wonder and say: You are a God of Wonder, who became man without change in Your divine nature. Wonderful are You who dwelt in a cave while heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Wonderful are You who by Your taking flesh reconciled Your Father with the creation and sowed peace and calm in the world.

Therefore we beseech You on this day of Your glorious birth from the Virgin Mary, that You will give us true knowledge concerning Your incarnation for our sake and a right understanding in regard to Your taking flesh for the salvation of the world. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

From the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian on the Theophany

Christ is born, let us sing praise.
Christ has come down from heaven, let us rejoice.
Christ is exalted on earth, praise the Lord all the earth.

Again let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult together,
because He is of heaven, yet truly appeared on earth.

Christ has appeared in the flesh.
Let us exult, trembling with joy.
Christ has come forth from the Virgin Mary.
Let women revere virginity and keep it
that they may become mothers of Christ.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Who would not adore Him who was in the beginning?
Who would not praise Him who came at the end of time?
Darkness is dispelled and light prevails.
Again the powers of evil are plunged in darkness
and the people of God are given light by the pillar of fire.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Let us praise and exult, offer thanks and adorations
to Him who is hallowed in the holy of holies of His Being.
He hallowed the womb of the Virgin
and descended and dwelt in her and was born from her.
We praise Him and His Father and His Holy Spirit for ever.

Lord, our Lord, in Your graciousness,
remember the dead who ate Your body and drank Your blood
and went to sleep and rest in Your hope.
When You come to judge nations and races
make them enter with You the feast of gladness.

Prayer of Incense

Treasure of fragrance confined within the womb of Mary
on the day of the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel,
today You are manifested to the world
and You permeate it with Your scent.

Perfume, Lord, Your worshippers whom You call Your friends,
with the sweet scent of Your love,
and make Your grace, now again dawning upon us,
bring healing and salvation to the human family.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Blessed are You who sent Your peace
to the Blessed One through the Wakeful One.

Make Your peace dwell in Your Churches,
and heal in them the deep wound of disunity.

Behold a star from Jacob takes the leadership,
a sceptre arises from Israel.
This oracle of Balaam, forced by God's irresistible Spirit,
is realized today by the birth of the Saviour.

The staff of Aaron which budded fresh shoots
and the dry wood that bore fruit,
these mysteries are realized today,
when the virgin womb gives birth.

The people had been fearing
that the prophets would not be found true,
that their words would be proved deceitful,
if the Saviour did not come.

To You be praise, Lord, from our whole race.
To You thanksgiving from all mouths
who celebrate Your great day.
May we sing praise in Your Kingdom.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The shepherds saw the glory of the Lord
when the angels brought the news of a great joy,
a joy to be shared by all the people.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Saviour is born.

He is Christ, the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

First Day	Luke	2:1-7	Mary gives birth to Jesus.
Fourth Day	Matthew	2:1-12	The visit of the wise men.
Seventh Day	Luke	2:16-21	He was named Jesus.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord let us stand well and answer all together with joy and gladness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who by Your birth from the Virgin Mary earned for us the ability to become children of God, not born of the fleshly desire of man but of God's gracious love to be His true offspring, make the glory of the One Beloved Son shine upon this assembly of children of God, that they may radiate Your grace and Your truth, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who took flesh from Mary, the daughter of David, and manifested Yourself as a true son of Palestine, enrich our understanding of Your Incarnation now set forth by the Churches in the diversity of peoples and cultures, and increase our appreciation for the spiritual patrimony and the religious traditions of this our country of India, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Christ our God, that while we celebrate the festival of Your manifestation to the world we may always, like the shepherds, glorify and praise God for what we have heard and seen, like the wise men, offer presents worthy of You, the dedication of our life, like Mary Your Mother treasure up all Your mysteries in our hearts, and like You always grow in wisdom and in favour with God and man. And we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... p. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.. P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and people on earth cry: Holy! Holy! to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You.
Make us also, earthly ones, keep vigil to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

At night let us offer praise with the Wakeful Ones and with the angels
make a joyful noise to the Wakeful One who never sleeps.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three, and the three are one,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one true God.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 95 (94) Come, ring out our joy to the Lord....

Response

Come, let us make a joyful noise to the Lord,
hail the rock who saves us.
Let us come before Him giving thanks.
Let us hail the Lord with our songs.

At Bethlehem, in the cave, Mary puts the Lion-cub in the manger.
Yet His presence is felt up to the ends of the world.
The wise men offer adorations to Him with their gifts.
Let us praise and exalt Him for ever.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Holy One who in the Holy of holies of His Being is hallowed with His Father and His Holy Spirit. He hallowed the womb of the Virgin when He descended and dwelt in her and was born from her. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

From the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian on the Theophany

The people who walked in the darkness of ignorance have seen a great light of knowledge. The old things have passed away, behold, all have become new. The letter gives way, the spirit prevails. The shadows depart, the truth enters. Melchizedek appears who is without mother in His first birth and without a father in His second. The laws of nature are dissolved that the new world may be brought into being. It is Christ's will, let us not go against Him. All you peoples clap your hands, because a child is born to us, and a son is given to us. His authority is on His shoulders, for He is lifted up on the Cross and His name is called, the Angel of Great Counsel of the Father. John will cry: Prepare the way of the Lord. But I will cry that He who is without flesh has taken flesh. The Word is made real to our eyes. The Invisible is seen. The Imperceptible

is perceived. He who is beyond time has a beginning. The Son of God becomes a son of man, Jesus Christ, yesterday and today and the same for ever.

Therefore we beseech You, Lord, on this day of Your great Theophany, Your wondrous birth from the Virgin Mary, that You will give us true knowledge concerning Your being one with the Father from all eternity and Your taking flesh in time for our salvation, that we may offer the right praise and true thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The kings with their people
take off their crowns from their heads
and offer adorations to the Son, the Firstborn,
the Holy One who appeared from Blessed Mary
and came for the salvation of the world, halleluia.
Blessed is He who has come for our salvation
and who is to come to raise us up.

The kings with their people
bring pure gifts, gold, myrrh and incense:
gold for His royal dignity, incense for His Godhead
and myrrh for His death for our sake, halleluia.
Blessed is He who made the just proclaim His coming by their revelations.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

O Prophet Isaiah, come and rejoice with us today
because your revelation has been fulfilled.
The Virgin has given birth to Emmanuel,
God and Lord, God mighty for evermore, halleluia.
Blessed is He who made the just proclaim His coming by their revelations.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

O Prophet Daniel, come and explain to us your word.
In what form did you see the Son?
I saw Him in the form of a youth.

And in the form of an elder I saw Him.
I saw Him in the form of a consuming fire, halleluia.
Blessed is He who made the just proclaim His coming by their revelations.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 96 (95) O sing a new song to the Lord....

Response

O sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Give the Lord, you families of peoples,
give the Lord glory and power,
give the Lord the glory of His name.

From Ephrata comes the Shepherd
and the shepherds worship His majesty.
The Food of Life is given us at Bethlehem, the city of David.
Behold! God-with-us descends.
He dispels the darkness and enlightens the whole creation.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Holy One who in the Holy of holies of His Being is hallowed with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He hallowed the womb of the Virgin and descended and dwelt in her and was born from her. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration at this time of the Night Vigil....

From the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian on the Theophany

The present festival is the Theophany or the Nativity. It is called both ways, two names of the same Mystery. God was manifested to man by birth. On the one hand He is Being, eternally Being, above cause and word, for there was no word before the Word. On the other hand, for

our sake, He is also Becoming, that He who gives us our being might also give us our well-being, or rather might restore us by His incarnation, after we had fallen from well-being by wickedness. The name Theophany is given to the mystery in reference to the divine manifestation, and that of Nativity in respect to His birth in the flesh.

Therefore we beseech You on this day of Your great Theophany, Your wonderful birth from the Virgin Mary, that You will give us true knowledge concerning Your being one with the Father from all eternity and Your taking flesh in time for our salvation, that we may offer the right praise and true thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God.
The Word was God and He made the world.
In His wisdom He created the heaven and set the stars in it.
He spread forth the earth above the waters
and made springs to gush from within it.
He created the sun for the day and the moon to rule over the night.
He made Adam in His own image
and breathed in him the breath of life
and gave him a commandment.
And He poured on him His love and graciousness.

The Virgin has brought forth a wonder.
Come let us go and see the Ancient of Days wrapped in strips of cloth.
The Virgin has brought forth an Infant older than all generations.
The young maiden carries the Hero who raised the mountains.
He who gives bread to the hungry sucks milk like an infant.
The Son who had no beginning willed to have beginning.
He came to birth in time He who is from all eternity.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Moses saw a great wonder when he ascended Mount Sinai
to receive the commandments for the rebellious people.
He saw fire blazing in a bush and the bush was not consumed.

There was prefigured the great mystery of the Saviour of the world
who dwelt in the Virgin and she was not burnt by the flame.
Instead of heaven He was laid in a manger.
Instead of flashes of lightnings He was wrapped up in strips of cloth.
Blessed is He who lowered Himself for the salvation of the world.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The angels descended from on high on this day of Your birth
and announced to the shepherds: Rise, you simple people
to sing praise to the Son of the Virgin who appeared on earth today
to enlighten the ends of the earth. The hope of life and salvation
is given today to Adam. Peace in the heights for the heavenly ones
and tranquillity in the depths for the earthly ones.
Blessed is He who lowered Himself for the salvation of the world.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Blessed are You who sent Your peace
to the Blessed One through the Wakeful One.

Make Your peace to dwell in Your Churches
and heal in them the deep wound of disunity.

Adam caused the Creation to fall in the sleep of death due to sin.
The Wakeful One descended to save us from being drowned in sin.
He illumined the night on which He appeared.

The Pure One came to purify us and does not suffer anything
that might distract our minds from wakefulness.

Jesus wants us to be vigilant, to be alert.
Satan makes us to become sleepers, indifferent to good things.
Let us be vigilant, beloved, and on the watch for all evil.
He who does not watch earnestly, his watching is sleep.
Let us watch and be alert, and stand firm in the faith.

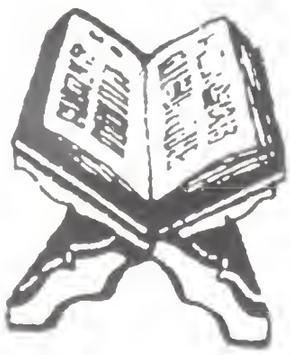
Let us guard the way to the ears and control the eyes.
Let us keep watch over the mouth and the tongue,
and purify all the movements of the heart.
Today Mary has hidden in us the leaven of the house of Abraham,
that we may always be merciful to those who harm us,
as David, the son of Jesse, was merciful to Saul.

To You be glory from our assembly,
and thanksgiving from the mouths of us all
who celebrate Your great day,
that we may, one day, sing praise in Your Kingdom.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION



Ferial Days after the Nativity
2nd and 5th Day [27]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God, that with the Wakeful Ones on high we may offer adorations and sing to You pure praises with songs of the Holy Spirit. Like the shepherds may we worship You with a true worship. And like the wise men may we be enlightened by You and give You glory, on this day of Your glorious birth from the Holy Virgin, our Lord and our God for ever. Amen.

Psalm 72 (71) O God, give Your judgement to the King....

Response

The mountains shall yield peace for the people and the hills justice.
He shall defend the poor of the people
and save the children of the needy.

O our Saviour, blessed is the day of Your birth
on which You gladden the earth and the heavens.
Behold, angels and people sing praise.

O our Saviour, on the day of Your Holy Nativity
the Churches rejoice and exult
and their people sing praise.

O Word, the Uniquely Beloved Son of God,
blessed is Your birth from the Virgin
for the salvation of Adam.

Glory to the Father, our Creator.
Adoration to the Son, our Saviour.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit, our Sanctifier.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P. 3

Response

A star announced the Good Tidings to the wise men in Persia.
They took presents from their place to offer them to the Child.
They found Him with Mary, His Mother,
and opening their treasures they presented their gifts.

The wise men honour Him with their presents, but the shepherds
offer Him gifts of praise, while the Wakeful Ones and the angels,
with wonder, sing halleluias to God who is born in the flesh.
Come, let us bow down and adore Him.

The Fiery Ones hallow Him with their threefold hallowings.
The Wakeful Ones and the angels cry: Blessed be His glory.
And the people on earth bow down and adore Him, crying out:
Come, let us bow down and adore Him.

How beautiful the praises sung by the Wakeful Ones from on high
in the cave at Bethlehem! Mary is filled with wonder
and Joseph marvels, as the Son is given glory
by the mouths of the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.

Let us offer praise to the Eternal Father
and adoration to the Son who saves us by His Cross.
Let us offer thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit and be faithful to Him.
One God, to Him be praise at all times.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Eternal Child who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made, and sprang forth from the Mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

From the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian on theTheophany

This is our festival. It is this which we celebrate today, the coming of God to us that we earthly ones, might go forth or rather go back to God, that putting off the old nature, we might put on the new. And that, as we died in Adam so we might have life in Christ, being born with Christ and crucified with Him and buried with Him and rising with Him. We have to undergo such a beautiful mutation. As the painful succeeded the more blissful, so will the more blissful come out of the painful. For where sin abounded grace abounds much more. If for a matter of taste we incurred condemnation, how much more will the passion of Christ bring us justification!

Therefore let us keep the feast not after the manner of worldly festivals but in a divine manner, not after the way of the world but in a fashion above the world, not as our own but as belonging to Him who is ours, our Master, not as of infirmity but as of healing, not as of creation but of the new creation, that in all things we may praise Him and thank Him and worship Him with His Father and His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

From the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian on the Theophany

The Word of God Himself who is before the worlds,
the Invisible, the Incomprehensible, the Light of light,
takes flesh for the sake of our flesh
and unites Himself with an intelligent soul,
flesh and spirit, the Spirit deifying the flesh.

O new and astonishing mingling together!
The Self-existent comes into existence,
the Uncreated is created, astonishing commingling
between the Deity and the corporeity of the flesh
through the mediation of an intelligent soul.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Giver of all riches becomes poor,
He assumes the poverty of our flesh
that we may assume the riches of His Godhead.
He that is fullness empties Himself
that we may have a share in His fullness.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

What are the riches of His Godhead?
What is the mystery by which we are surrounded?
We had a share in the image and we did not keep it.
He partakes of our flesh, both saving the image
and making the flesh immortal, incorruptible.

Lord, our Lord, in Your graciousness,
remember the dead who ate Your flesh and drank Your blood
and went to sleep and rest in Your hope.
When You come to judge nations and races
make them enter with You the feast of gladness.

Prayer of Incense

Treasure of Fragrance confined within the womb of Mary
on the day of the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel,
today You are manifested to the world
and You permeate it with Your scent.

Perfume, Lord, Your worshippers whom You call Your friends,
with the sweet scent of Your love,
and make Your grace, now again dawning upon us,
bring healing and salvation to humankind.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

You who by Your birth revealed Yourself to the simple and the wise
and offered peace on earth to all people of goodwill,
make Your peace reign in the four quarters of the earth.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to our Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people in the light of Your Gospel of Life.

You who are wise, come and see
the newborn Child wrapped up in strips of cloth.
Consider Him on whose gesture the whole creation hangs.
Marvel as you see Him lying in a manger for animals,
who with His Father rules over the heights and the depths.

Think that the Virgin carries in her arms
Him who sits on the throne of the heavenly ones.
Him before whom Gabriel and his angels
desire only to fall on their faces,
Joseph and his family dandle in their arms.

He before whom the Fiery Ones fly singing their hallowings
is carried by men and praised in their tongues.
The heavens where He dwells are too small to contain Him,
but the arms of Mary are large enough to hold Him.

Our Lord, at Your birth let praise resound in hymns of fire
with all thanksgiving from the race of the children of Adam.
Let heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land sing: "Praise."
On the day of Your birth which gladdens us, to You be glory.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth.

Give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people in the light of Your Gospel of Life.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The shepherds saw the glory of the Lord
when the angels brought the news of a great joy,

a joy to be shared by all people.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Saviour is born.
He is Christ. He is the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

2nd day Luke 2:7-14 The angels' announcement to the shepherds.

5th day Matthew 2:13-21 The flight into Egypt.

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

As on the 1st day p. 417

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... p. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P. 7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and people on earth cry: Holy! Holy! to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to You, Son of God, who in Your goodness descended
and of Your own will became a son of man.
Shepherds and wise men honour You with their offerings.
Heaven and earth are filled with You.
Yet, You are wrapped up in strips of cloth and laid in a manger.

The Holy Virgin Mary carries You and sings songs to You:
O Life-giving Lamb of God, truly You granted me to carry You!
You carry the earth. You carry the heaven. And I a Virgin carry You.
What great blessings addressed to me from all peoples of the earth!

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 97 (96) The Lord is King, let earth rejoice....

Response

The Lord is King, let earth rejoice....
Light dawns for the believer and gladness for the upright of heart.
Rejoice in the Lord you believers
and give glory to His Holy Name.

From heaven the Father sends His Beloved Son
who is pleased to be born in the flesh.
The Fiery Ones, ablaze, stir in their heavenly companies
and they worship Him saying: Praise Him and exalt Him for ever.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Child of Wonder who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned, and was enclosed in the flesh which He made, and sprang forth from the Mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ, True Child of the Father, You came to a second birth. Ancient of Days, You placed Yourself beneath times and seasons and moments and measures... You who are arrayed in light are wrapped up in strips of cloth beyond telling. You who ride on the heavens are held in arms. Clouds and fire surround You and the knees of a maiden nurse you beyond understanding. You who provide for worlds and peoples suck milk from a virgin. The angels surround You but Joseph has to look after You. A star which goes before the wise men guides them to Bethlehem and makes known Your Godhead. They carry gifts and offer worship and proclaim Your Kingdom... Today the heavens rejoice and the earth exults with all that is in it. Paradise is glad because the way to it is cleared. And we who glory by being redeemed by You within the flesh offer You worship while we bring, not passing gifts like the wise men, but spiritual fruits of a sincere mind, free from the baseness of sin...

Therefore, we beseech You, that as You stayed in Bethlehem, You will stay and dwell in our hearts. And we will gladden You with our songs, like the wise men with their gifts, and offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

All the generations who had some knowledge of this
inestimable treasure, hold our generation blessed;
for they had hoped to see it, but could reach it
only in their dreams, while we enjoy it in reality.
For them it remained a sealed treasure.
They had been wondering to whom it would be opened.
They had longed for it, the just, the prophets and kings,
and all the good people who had some knowledge of it.

Today He dwells in a cave for whom the heavens are too narrow,
clothed in strips of cloth who is arrayed in glory and splendour.
He is cradled on the knees who makes the Winged Creatures tremble.
He who provides nourishment for all creatures sucks a little milk.
Glory to His humility who willed to lower Himself to our condition.
As He became man He endured all that belongs to man with love.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

At the birth of the King Christ, the Wakeful Ones on high stir,
and with the ranks of fire and spirit descend to Bethlehem in the cave.
They bring the Good News to the shepherds, the Saviour is born to them
who is the Lord, our God, in the city of David the King.
And they sing: Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and below on earth, good hope for all people, the mortal ones.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

In the beginning was the Word, as John wrote for us,
God who descended and rested in the womb of the Virgin.
He took flesh, clothing Himself with a body as He willed.

He appeared in the creation and enlightened the ends of the earth
which were formerly in darkness. And when the Evil One heard
that the Son of God was born he lamented, crying out:
Woe is me! From henceforth the power of my kingdom is taken away.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 98 (97) Sing a new song to the Lord....

Response

The Lord has made known His salvation.
He has remembered His loving kindness and faithfulness.
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of God.

Glory to the Father who sent His Beloved Son for our salvation.
Adoration to the Son whose birth is eternal, without beginning.
Exaltation to the Holy Spirit. One true God, to Him all praise.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Eternal Child who for our salvation came to a second birth in the flesh from the Virgin full of grace. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

When we consider the wondrous mystery of Your Economy, O Christ, our Lord and God, first Your eternal birth from the Father, and Your second and saving birth from Mary, we give thanks for Your power beyond measure and the abundance of Your compassion and mercy. While Your eternal birth was hidden and concealed from the Wakeful Ones, by Your will and that of Your Father and Your Holy Spirit You descended to the second birth in Your love, that You might snatch us from our servitude to our captor. And therefore You sent Your holy prophets like messengers of peace. One of them figured You in the lamb which was slain at sunset for our salvation... Another prophesied: Behold, a virgin shall conceive

and bear Emmanuel. One proclaimed: A star should rise from Jacob and should rule over Israel. Finally You sent the head of the angels to the Pure Virgin, full of holiness, and instructed him to announce a message of joy: The Lord is with you, blessed among women. And while You rejoiced like an infant in the virgin womb, You were forming infants in the wombs of their mothers by Your divine commands. While You lay in the poor manger like one without strength, You held all creatures in being by Your divine power.

Therefore we beseech You, O Lord, who fulfilled all these things in deed for our salvation, grant us that we may be in our way of life like the children whom You praised in Your Holy Gospel. May we have understanding of the mystery of Your exalted childhood and learn from it humility and true love for You and for one another, and right obedience to those who are set over us. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn of Saint Ephrem

This is a great marvel,
the Son who dwells in all things dwells in the flesh.
Everything dwells in Him and it suffices for Him
yet He is limited by nothing, all things exist by His will.
While it is right to say that all things dwell in His flesh,
His whole being dwells in all things.
Blessed is He who is not limited,
neither by the heights nor by the depths.

You have hidden Your greatness from all,
You have revealed Your love to us.
Our Lord, You have withdrawn from Your greatness
to speak to us by Your love.
Your love has taken hold of You and has lowered You to our poverty.
Your love has made You infant, Your love has made You a man.
You have reduced Your greatness and You have extended it.
Blessed is Your power to decrease and blessed is Your power to increase.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to You who became an earthly one, You a heavenly one by nature.
In Your love You became the Firstborn of Mary,
You who are the Firstborn of the Godhead.
By name You became the son of Joseph,
You who are the Son of the Most High.
You became son of man of Your own will, You who are God by nature.
Glorious are You, by Your will and by Your nature.
Blessed are You, O Glorious One, who clothed Yourself in our image.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

She who bore You, our Lord, became also Mother of the Creation.
Again when she bore You she became Mother of humankind.
She bore You in the flesh and bore You in the Spirit.
All who followed this birth she brought forth in Your image.
Your birth became the birth of all.
Blessed are You who when You were born, made all to be born.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Blessed are You who sent Your peace
to the Blessed One through the Wakeful One.

Make Your peace to dwell in Your Churches
and heal in them the deep wound of disunity.

Adam caused the Creation to fall in the sleep of death due to sin.
The Wakeful One descended to save us from being drowned in sin.
He illumined the night on which He appeared.
The Pure One came to purify us and does not suffer anything
that might distract our minds from wakefulness.

Jesus wants us to be vigilant, to be alert.
Satan makes us to become sleepers, indifferent to good things.
Let us be vigilant, beloved, and on the watch for all evil.
He who does not watch earnestly, his watching is sleep.
Let us watch and be alert and stand firm in the faith.

Let us guard the way to the ears and control the eyes.
Let us keep watch over the mouth and the tongue.
Let us purify all movements of the heart.
Today Mary has hidden in us the leaven of the house of Abraham
that we may always be merciful to those who harm us,
as David the son of Jesse was merciful to Saul.

To You be glory from our assembly,
and thanksgiving from the mouths of all
who celebrate Your great day,
that we may be given to sing praise in Your Kingdom.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

Ferial Days after the Nativity
3rd and 6th Day [28]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord God, that with the Wakeful Ones on high we may offer adorations and sing pure praises with songs of the Holy Spirit. Like the shepherds may we worship You with a true worship. And like the wise men may we be enlightened by You and give You glory, on this day of Your glorious birth from the Holy Virgin, our Lord and our God for ever. Amen.

Psalm 89 (88): 1-38 I will sing for ever of Your love...

Response

With My Chosen One I have made a covenant.
I have sworn an oath to David My servant:
I will keep My love for Him always.
I will establish His dynasty for ever.

While the shepherds kept vigil watching over their flock,
angels descended and announced to them:
A Saviour is born to you today in the city of David.
He is the Lord, the Christ who has come to save the creation.

Do not be afraid, said the angel to the shepherds.
I announce Good News to you and great joy for the whole world.
Today in the city of David the Saviour has been born to you.
He is the Christ, the Lord. And this is how you will know Him:
you will find a baby all wrapped up, lying in a manger.

And all at once a great company of heavenly beings appeared
singing praises to God: Glory to God in the highest heaven
and on earth peace and good hope for all people.
The shepherds hastened to Bethlehem. They found Mary and Joseph
and the baby lying in the manger, and they marvelled.

Glory to the Father, our Creator.
Adoration to the Son, our Saviour.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit, our Sanctifier.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

A star announced Good Tidings to the wise men in Persia.
They took presents from their place to offer them to the Child.
They found Him with Mary, His Mother,
and opening their treasures they presented their gifts.

The wise men honour Him with their presents but the shepherds
offer Him gifts of praise, while the Wakeful Ones and the angels,
with wonder, sing halleluiahs to God who is born in the flesh.
Come, let us bow down and adore Him.

The Fiery Ones hallow Him with their threefold hallowings.
The Wakeful Ones and the angels cry: Blessed be His glory.
And the people on earth bow down and adore Him, crying out:
Come, let us bow down and adore Him.

How beautiful the praises sung by the Wakeful Ones from on high
in the cave at Bethlehem! Mary is filled with wonder
and Joseph marvels, as the Son is given glory
by the mouths of the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.

Let us offer praise to the Eternal Father
and adoration to the Son who saved us by His Cross.
Let us offer thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit and be faithful to Him.
One God, to Him be praise at all times.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Eternal Child who was conceived in the womb which He fashioned and was enclosed in the flesh which He made and sprang forth from the Mother whom He created. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

From the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian on the Theophany

What a multitude of mysteries there are in the festivals of Christ, all of which have one goal and purpose, our quest of perfection and return to the first condition of Adam. Now then when we consider His conception, we leap before Him, if not like John from the womb yet like David before the ark. Let us commemorate the census or enrolment on account of which our names were written in heaven... Let us celebrate the birth and honour little Bethlehem which leads back to Paradise. Let us venerate the manger through which came to us the true food of our souls, the bread of life... Let us be guided by the star of faith and bring gifts with the wise men, gold, incense and myrrh as to a king and to God and to one who died for us. With the shepherds let us glorify Him, with the angels let us join in their songs and with the archangels sing hymns. Let this festival be common to the powers in heaven and the powers on earth, for we believe that the heavenly ones join in our exultation and keep solemn festival today, because they love God, just like those of whom David says that they ascend with Christ, the King of Glory, bidding one another to lift up the gates and let Him enter in the glory of the Father which He prepared for us. With them let us praise and thank and worship Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn of Hyppolytus of Rome

The Father sent the Word at the end of time.
He could no longer leave it to be uttered by prophets,
or guessed at through obscure allegories.
The Son revealed Himself, that seeing Him we might be saved.

The Word was made man, assuming our own nature,
taking flesh from a daughter of man, all pure.

He clothed Himself with man's old nature
in order to fashion Him anew.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

He bore exhaustion and was hungry and thirsty.
He did not dispense with sleep or reject suffering.
He was obedient unto death, even death on a cross,
and thus made His resurrection more manifest.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The Word Incarnate is the Firstfruits of the new humanity.
He who knows Him becomes immortal, incorruptible.
Friends of God, with Christ co-heirs of all that belongs to Him.
It becomes ours, as we are deified and become immortal.

The two worlds belong to You, O Lord,
Your power extends both here and there.
Keep the living in Your steadfast love
and the departed in Your graciousness.

Prayer of Incense

Treasure of Fragrance confined within the womb of Mary
on the day of the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel,
today You are manifested to the world
and You permeate it with Your scent.

Perfume, Lord, Your servants whom You call Your friends,
by the sweet scent of Your love,
and make Your grace, now again dawning upon us,
bring healing and salvation to humankind.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Blessed are You who sent Your peace
to the Blessed One through the Wakeful One.

Make Your peace to dwell in Your Churches
and save them from the present disunity.

Behold a star from Jacob takes the leadership,
a sceptre arises from Israel.
This oracle of Balaam, forced by God's irresistible Spirit,
is realized today in the birth of the Saviour.

The staff of Aaron which budded fresh shoots,
and the dry wood that bore fruit,
these mysteries are realized today
when the virgin womb gives birth.

The people had been fearing
that the prophets would not be found true,
that their words would be proved deceitful,
if the Saviour did not come.

To You be praise, Lord, from our whole race.
To You thanksgiving from all mouths
who celebrate Your great day.
May we be given to sing praise in Your Kingdom.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The shepherds saw the glory of the Lord
when the angels brought the news of a great joy,
a joy to be shared by all people.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Saviour is born. He is Christ, the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

3rd day	Luke	2: 15-20	The shepherd's, visit to the cave.
6th day	Luke	2:41-52	Jesus found in the Temple

Intercessions and Concluding Prayer

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Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P. 7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you.. P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and people on earth cry: Holy! Holy to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

In the beginning was the Word, as John has written.
And the Word was with God. And the Word was God.
He descended and dwelt in the womb and became flesh
and dwelt among us and we saw His glory,
such glory as belongs to the Father's Uniquely Beloved Son.

While the shepherds kept vigil watching over their flock,
angels descended near them and announced to them:
A Saviour is born to you today in the city of David.
He is the Lord, the Christ who has come to save the creation.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 99 (98) The Lord is King....

Response

He is a king who loves what is right.
He has established equity, justice and order...
Exalt the Lord, our God.
Bow down before His holy mountain
for the Lord our God is Holy.

The heavens rejoice and the earth exults
and the sea leaps for joy,
all parts of the earth sing praise to the Hidden Being
who gladdens them on the day of His birth.
Behold, they offer glory to Him.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Holy One who in the Holy of holies of His Being is hallowed with His Father and His Holy Spirit. He hallowed the womb of the Virgin and descended and dwelt in her, and was born from her. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration at this time of the Night Vigil...

From the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian on the Theophany

The Creator-Word determining to produce a single being out of both the visible and the invisible creation fashioned man. Taking a body from already existing matter and placing in it His own breath of life which He, the Word, knew to be an intelligent soul and the image of God, He created a second world. He placed him on the earth, great in littleness, a new angel, a mingled worshipper, fully initiated into the visible creation, but only partially into the spiritual; king of all upon earth but subject to the King above; earthly and heavenly; temporal yet immortal; visible yet spiritual, halfway between greatness and lowliness, combining spirit and flesh in one person... the one that he might live to praise his Creator, the other that he might suffer, and by suffering be put

in remembrance and corrected, if he were found proud of his greatness. A living creature under training here to move elsewhere and, to complete the Mystery, to be deified by his inclination to God. For to this tends that light of truth which we here possess in measure, that we should both see and experience the splendour of God which is worthy of Him who made us, and will remake us again after a loftier fashion. To Him let us offer praise, thanksgiving and adoration, and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The first year of the birth of our Saviour
is the source of all good things and the foundation of life.
Truly it carries an abundance of blessings.
It is the sum total of all good,
like the first day in the beginning.
It is like the great pillar of the creation
which supports the edifice of the universe,
the first day of blessings for humankind.

In the second year of the birth of our Saviour
the wise men rejoice and offer their treasures to Him.
The pharisees are gloomy and the kings are alarmed about Him:
children are slain for Him, offerings are made in Bethlehem,
offerings of ardent desire, gold offered out of love,
but also dreadful offerings,
children put to the sword out of envy.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

On the day that illumines all, there is joy for His birth.
The Pillar of Light puts to flight
the works of darkness by its dazzling light.
It is in the likeness of this day
that the light which dispelled the darkness was created
and it spread beautifully over the creation.
The dazzling light of the birth of our Saviour
breaks through the darkness of people's hearts.

The first day, the head and beginning of days,
is like a root that sprouts all things.
But our Saviour's birthday is more glorious still.
It is like a tree growing out of the ground.
His death is like the root in the earth,
His Resurrection is the top reaching up to heaven.
His words are the branches
which extend to the four quarters of the earth.
His body is the fruit for all to eat.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 100 (99) Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth...

Response

Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before Him, singing for joy.
Indeed, how good is the Lord, eternal His merciful love.

You were born from the virginity of Mary
and became man of Your own will
to save the weak race of humankind.
We have come into Your presence, be gracious to us, Jesus full of love.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Eternal Child of the Father, the Radiance of His Being, who at the end of time came forth from the Virgin Mary and delivered the world by His Incarnation, praise to Him at this time of the Night Vigil...

From the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian on the Theophany.

When through the devil's malice man forgot the commandment which had been given to him, he was banished at once from the tree of life and from Paradise.... Having been first chastened by many means: by word, by law, by prophets, and after having been purified by an alternation of trials and graces, he still required a great aid. And that was the Word of God Himself, the Word who is before all worlds, the Invisible, the Incomprehensible, the Bodiless, the Beginning of all beginnings, the Light of light, the Source of life and of immortality, the Image of the archetypal beauty, the Immovable Seal, the Unchangeable Image. The Revelation of the Father's Nature and His Word came to His own image and took from him flesh for the sake of our flesh. He mingled Himself with an intelligent soul for the sake of our soul, purifying like by like, and He was made man in all points, sin excepted. He was conceived by the Virgin who was first purified in body and soul by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, it was needful both that childbearing should be honoured and that virginity should receive a higher honour. He came forth then as God with that which He had assumed, one person in two natures, flesh and Spirit, of which the latter deified the former. O new commingling! O strange conjunction! The Self-existent comes into being, the Uncreated is created, that which cannot be contained is contained by the intervention of an intellectual soul mediating between the Deity and the corporeity of the flesh. And He who gives riches becomes poor: He assumes the poverty of our flesh that we may assume the riches of His Godhead. He that is full, empties Himself, He empties Himself of His glory, for a while, that we may have a share in His fullness for ever. To Him let us offer praise, thanksgiving and adoration, and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

In the month of Nisan Gabriel announced Your conception,
and in December we saw Your birth,
O glorious Child of the Father, beloved fruit of Mary,
the creation eats You and obtains life eternal.

Holy is this day on which there is peace for the nations.
The Father sends us the Hope of Life, His Beloved Son.
Behold, the angels join with humankind
to sing praise to His humility.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

From the womb, John announced His conception,
and the Holy Spirit from on high, that He is the Son of God.
And the Father in the highest heaven cried out:
This is My Beloved Son who has come to save the creation.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

When the sun conceals its rays our Lord manifested His rays.
While there was peace among the children of men
the Wakeful Ones made a resounding noise.
In a quiet night for humankind dawned upon us the True Light.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Blessed are You who sent Your peace
to the Blessed One through the Wakeful One.

Make Your peace dwell in Your Churches
and heal in them the deep wound of disunity.

Adam caused the creation to fall in the sleep of death due to sin.
The Wakeful One descended to save us from being drowned in sin.
He illumined the night on which He appeared.
The Pure One came to purify us and does not suffer anything
that might distract our minds from wakefulness.

Jesus asks us to be vigilant, to be alert.
Satan makes us to become sleepers, indifferent to good things.
Let us be vigilant, beloved, and on the watch for all evil.
He who does not watch earnestly, his watching is sleep.
Let us watch and be alert, and stand firm in the faith.

Let us guard the way to the ears and control the eyes.
Let us keep watch over the mouth and the tongue,
and purify all the thoughts of the heart.
Today Mary has hidden in us the leaven of the house of Abraham
that we may always be merciful to those who harm us,
as David, the son of Jesse, was merciful to Saul.

To You be glory from our assembly,
and thanksgiving from the mouth of us all,
who celebrate Your great day,
that we may be given to sing praise in Your Kingdom.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 1

The Naming of Jesus [29]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

O Jesus, through Your saving name which You were given eight days after Your birth, the name that is greater than any other name, grant us to serve You and Your people with a joyful and renewed heart, that from this first day of the new year, we may grow rich in conduct well pleasing to You. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 19 (18) The heavens proclaim the glory of God...

Response

The heavens proclaim the glory of God
and the firmament shows forth the work of His hands.
Your name, Jesus, revives our souls, it gladdens our hearts.
It shines clear and gives light to our minds.

Jesus, Your name is a lamp shining in a dark place,
until the day dawns and the morning light shines in our hearts.
Jesus, brighten this first day and all the days of this year
with the light and fire of Your love.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Your name, Jesus, is a light on our path.
It is the lamp shining in the dark places, a marvellous light.
The saints say: It is like honey in the mouth,
a melody in the ear and jubilation in the heart.
You are the True Light that enlightens the creation.

Let Your name, Jesus, be yoked to our breath,
that we may experience the joy of Your life in us.
And with Your Apostle we will cry and say: I live. Yet not I.
Jesus, with You our life is hidden in God.
You live in us, breathing in us, through Your Spirit, life divine.

Today the Son of God and of Mary is given the name Jesus
for He has come to save His people from their sins
and set the creation itself free from its bondage to decay.
He who is God is seen in the world in the form of man.
Yet the heights and the depths are filled with Him.

In You, Jesus, all things were created, in heaven and on earth.
All things visible and invisible converge on You.
The creation, even in travail, utters Your name.
As You cause the dawn of salvation to rise on us again,
guide us throughout this year along the way of peace.

Glory to the Father who revealed the name of His Son
to the Holy Virgin Mary, His Mother, through the angel.
Adoration to the Son on whom was bestowed
the name that is greater than any other name.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit without whose help
no one can utter with faith the holy name of Jesus.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Giver of heavenly gifts without number who revealed Himself to us in diverse ways and was pleased to teach us to call on His name. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

While we celebrate the mystery of the birth of Your Son and venerate His name revealed by the angel before He was conceived in the womb of His Mother, we recall with joy the revelations of the divine names in the Economy of Salvation from the origins of humankind. At the time of the Cosmic Covenant, it was Enosh the son of Seth who was

the first to invoke the name of the Lord. When You entered into Covenant with Abraham You appeared to Him and said: " I am El Shaddai," the God of the Mountain. And when You sent Moses to Pharoah with the mission of liberating Your people, You revealed to Him the divine transcendence of the Deity for which man can never find a worthy name. Yet You sent the prophets to speak in Your name and the sages meditated on it and found their joy in it. But it was at the end of time when You spoke to us through Your Son that You revealed Yourself in Him as our Saviour. To His disciples it was given to experience the power of the Name in which the sick were made whole, the dead were raised to life and salvation was given to all, until at the name of Jesus every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

Therefore we beseech You, Lord our God, prompt us always to sing praise to the divine and holy name, now known to us in the love of Your Son Jesus, our Saviour. Strengthen us to make it known among the nations. Impress it as a seal in our hearts that we may be true witnesses to the Gospel and like Jesus always grow in understanding and wisdom before God and people. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You, Father, and to Your Son and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Behold, the Son of God was made lower than the angels,
when He clothed Himself with flesh to dwell among us.
But He is made still lower today when He is circumcised
receiving Himself in His body the remedy to man's corruption.
The Lord of the law humbly subjects Himself to the law.

Praise to You, O Holy Infant, on this day of Your naming,
when You are called Jesus to assume the work of our salvation.
As rain and dew come down from heaven and return not there,
but water the earth and make it produce fruits, did You, Jesus,
not return to the Father until You accomplished our salvation.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

In My name you will cast out devils.
In My name you shall speak new tongues, said Jesus,

You shall lay hands on the sick and make them whole...
Gold and silver we have none, said Peter to the lame man.
But, I give you what I have, in the name of Jesus get up and walk.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

God gave Jesus the name that is greater than any other name,
so that in honour of His name, Jesus,
all beings in heaven, on earth and in the world below
will fall on their knees and openly proclaim
that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

Lord, our Lord, in Your graciousness,
remember the dead who ate Your body and drank Your blood,
and went to sleep and rest in Your hope.
When You come to judge nations and races
make them enter with You the feast of gladness.

Prayer of Incense

O God who receive the offerings of Your devotees,
receive this incense which we offer to You out of love,
on the day on which Your Son was given the name Jesus,
revealed by the angel before His conception
in the womb of the Holy Virgin Mary, His blessed Mother.

Jesus, Your name is like a perfume poured out.
As Your love it is more delightful than honey.
Most delightful also is the fragrance of its scent.
For this, all devotees of the Name love You.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who by Your holy name deliver Your Church from untruth,
give her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

The Son is close to His Father, by glory as well as by name.
But as the Father is inscrutable so also is the Son.
To scrutinize the Firstborn is to scrutinize the Father also.
Meditation on the name of the Uniquely Beloved Son is the bridge.
He who crosses by this bridge crosses over to the inscrutable Father.

O Son, Your name is a treasure that carries both judgement and love.
He who scrutinizes Your name curiously will find judgement.
But he who seeks it as the merchant of fine pearls
and sells everything for the sake of it, finds salvation.
Your judgement is bitter to our old selves and makes our hearts weep,
but in Your name we find love and we taste its bliss.

Jesus! O glorious name! secret bridge!
You enable us to cross from death to life.
We came to You and with You we stayed.
We are entranced by the very sound of Your name.

Your love makes Your very self a bridge for Your servants.
In Your love we will cross over to Your Father.
We will cross over and we will say to Him:
Blessed is He who sweetens His severity through the love of His Son.

Glory to the Father who gave His Son the name Jesus.
Adoration to the Son who by His name was revealed as our Saviour.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who prompted the apostles
to call on the name of Jesus to heal all diseases.
And on us God's graciousness on this feast and on all feasts.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The splendour of His name reaches beyond heaven and earth.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
How beautiful is He who speaks of peace,
who brings joy, giving salvation to the world.
Great in the midst of us is Jesus, our Saviour.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 2: 15 - 21 The Naming of Jesus.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us stand well and answer all together with joy and gladness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were born in poverty at Bethlehem, and on the eighth day were revealed as Saviour of the world when You received Your name Jesus, make Your people live as witnesses to the truth of Your salvation, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who when You were called Jesus made us know that You are our Saviour, grant that all those who are groping in the dark or shaken in their faith may recognize You as the Uniquely Beloved Son sent by the Father to make us Your brothers, so that You may bring salvation to all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who promised to grant all requests made in Your name, we beg and beseech You, through that most holy name, that the poor and the lowly, the illiterate and the downtrodden may obtain all fundamental human rights, with dignity of life and true freedom, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over

the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Jesus Christ and Saviour, to celebrate all the mysteries of Your birth in the flesh from the Virgin Mary with deep faith, and make us always find our joy in the praise and prayer of Your name, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you ...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy!Holy!Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Word who was God became flesh, humbling Himself.
He walked the path of obedience all the way to death.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Because He humbled Himself, God raised Him above all.
He gave Him the name that is greater than any other name.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Praise to You, Jesus, who after eight days received Your name,
the name revealed by the angel before You were conceived.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory, honour, adoration and highest exaltation
to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him be praise, at all times.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 45 (44):1-10 My heart overflows with noble words...

Response

Our hearts overflow with noble words.
To the King we must sing the songs we have made:
You are the fairest of the children of men
and graciousness is poured on Your lips.

Your name, Jesus, is like a perfume poured out
which makes joy and love vibrate in our hearts.
How fragrant the scent of its perfume!
Draw us, and we shall run in Your footsteps.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Eternal Being who was born of a virgin mother for our salvation, and fulfilled the prophecies of the seers by His manifestation, and put the seal on the law of Moses by His circumcision in the flesh. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We praise You, Jesus who are God on earth, God among men. No longer the God who gives His law amid flashes of lightnings, but the God who humbles Himself, submitting Himself to the law for our sake, God in the flesh, one of us, our blood brother. God comes in the flesh in order to destroy the death concealed in the flesh. In the same way as remedies remove infections in the body when they are assimilated, so death which held human nature in its power is overpowered by the coming of the Godhead into the human family. O the depth of God's goodness and of His love for us. We give glory to Him, for this day the Saviour who is Christ the Lord is manifested to us, not in His divine form, but in the form of a servant, He who comes to set us free from our servitude. We shout for joy for today the new humanity is manifested. Today Adam's condemnation is lifted. His sons shall no longer hear: You are dust and to dust you shall return. United with Jesus, the heavenly man, they are lifted up to heaven.

Therefore we beseech You, our Lord and Saviour who walked the ways of a true incarnation, reveal to the world the power and the grace manifested in Your name, and bring to fulfilment the longings, obscure or ardent, of all those who are groping for salvation, that they may find You and we with them offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Blessed is he who calls unceasingly on the name of Jesus.
He will obtain uninterrupted perseverance in prayer
with perfect purity and tranquillity of mind,
the perfection of life of the true disciple,
the fruit of great labours and service with unremitting zeal.

This is the fulfilment of Jesus' own prayer for His disciples:
May the love with which You have loved Me be in them
and may they be in Us... May they all be one
as You, Father, are in Me and I in You. May they also be in Us,
that the world may believe that it was You who sent Me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

I felt the bliss of God's love in my whole being, said the pilgrim.
In my soul inner peace, ecstasy, purity of thoughts, and above all
a blessed awareness of God. In my body a warm sensation in the heart,
lightness, freshness, quick pulse, an overall well-being.
Life became a joy. I was immune to illness and sadness.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

There were revelations, intellectual insights
and interpretations of the Holy Scriptures.
In all circumstances I felt free from worldly tumult,
I tasted the sweetness of the inner presence.
I sensed the nearness of God, experienced His all embracing love.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 72 (71) O God, give Your judgement to the king...

Response

O God, endow the King with Your justice,
give Your righteousness to the King's son:
May He defend the poor of the people,
and help the children of the needy.

On the Feast of the Naming of Jesus
the Churches rejoice here on earth.
In heaven the Wakeful Ones sing glory
and the angels chant joyful hymns of praise.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

In Commemoration of Saints Basil and Gregory, the Great Teachers.

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to Him who gives wisdom to the doctors of truth and renowned fathers, to the Shepherd full of wisdom by whose wisdom the true shepherds are made wise. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration at this time of the Night Vigil...

Blessed are you, O glorious Basil and noble Gregory, sweet pipes through whom the songs of the Holy Spirit were sung. Blessed are you, preachers of orthodox faith, who by your teachings gave to drink of the waters of life to all believers. The prophets rejoice in you because you interpreted their mysteries. The apostles exult in you because you built the Churches on the foundations they laid. The martyrs and confessors are glad on account of you because you spoke in praise of their great conflict against the Evil One and his powers. The fathers and doctors long to meet you who enlighten us by your divine doctrine. Blessed are you, faithful and wise stewards, glorious Basil and noble Gregory, who have authority over the heavenly treasure trove, fathers of truth, blessed shepherds, initiators of the believers into the divine mysteries, lofty examples of holiness in the monastic life and in the episcopacy, channels of the life-giving waters which flow from the Most High Godhead, friends of the Father, beloved of the Son, familiars of the Holy Spirit.

Be now intercessors on our behalf with the Holy Trinity from whom you received wisdom, that there may be bestowed on us, by your prayer, discernment and wisdom for spiritual attainment. Pray that peace and tranquillity with love may prevail all over the world, that we may rejoice and exult with praises of the Father who chose you, of the Son, Christ who crowned you, and of the Holy Spirit, the giver of wisdom to all, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn of Aphrahates the Sage of Persia

Jesus! O glorious name! O secret bridge!
You make it possible for us to cross from death to life.

Jesus, You are a lamp on the lampstand
which enlightens the whole world
and purifies the sins of men.

Jesus, You are the pearl of great price,
and to buy it we sell all our possessions.
You are the treasure hidden in a field.
When we find it we sell everything we have
and we purchase that field.

Jesus, You are the source of life
from which we slake our thirst.
You are the table heavily laden with the food of life.
We who are famished eat there with great delight.

Jesus, You are the nectar that fills man's heart with sweetness.
All who suffer, drink of it and their pains vanish.
You are the festal garment for the day of victory,
the cloak that conquerors wear.

Jesus, You are the real vine and Your Father is the vinedresser.
We are the branches implanted in You
and in You alone we can bear fruit.

Jesus! O glorious name! O secret bridge!
You make it possible for us to cross from death to life.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamation Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens.. P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Lord Jesus, be gracious to us by the power of Your holy name.

By the power of Your name, greater than any other name,
pardon us and be gracious to the whole world.

There is no name under heaven given among men,
O Jesus, whereby salvation can be obtained.
In Your name we are given to share in God's life.
All who call on Your name will be saved.

Your name is oil poured out, O Jesus.
The name is poured out that saves all who invoke it.
Let them come from the East and the West, from the North and the South,
for it has pleased You to call from the ends of the earth
to feast at Your banquet and be filled with gladness.

Your name is oil poured out, and what an outpouring!
It not only bathes the heavens and the earth, it bedews the underworld.
All beings in heaven and on earth and in the underworld
should fall on their knees and all will proclaim
that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of the Father.

Lord Jesus, be gracious by the power of Your holy name.

By the power of Your name, greater than any other name,
pardon us and be gracious to the whole world.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P.6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 6

The Baptism and Epiphany of our Lord[30]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Christ our God, to celebrate this glorious festival of lights, Your Baptism and Divine Epiphany, in purity and holiness and with divine praises, while You bestow upon us the pardon of offences and sins, our Lord and our God for ever. Amen.

Psalm 29 (28) O give the Lord you sons of God...

Response

While on high the heavenly powers stand in fear and trembling,
He whose authority governs the powers in the highest heaven
stands naked in the river Jordan.
He is the Lord, the Saviour,
the God of our fathers and Lord of the whole creation.

The Word of the Father stands in the river Jordan like an ordinary man.
The Creator and Sower of the worlds is baptized by John.
The heavenly orders attend in awe and wonder
seeing the Lord standing naked, the Saviour,
the God of our fathers and Lord of the whole creation.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Christ is baptized in the river Jordan.
From heaven the Father and the Spirit bear witness to Him.

The Spirit by His appearance, the Father by His voice:
This is My Son, the One Beloved. In Him is all My delight.

John cries out by the river Jordan:
This is the Life-giving Lamb of God.
And pointing at Him with his finger for the crowd he says:
It is He who takes away the sin of the world and saves it.

Christ comes from the heights and is manifested to us.
He is baptized in the river Jordan by John, His preacher.
The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove rests on His head
and the Father cries out: This is My Beloved.

Church of true believers, sing praise to the Heavenly Bridegroom
who betrothed you in the river. In the assemblies of your people,
sing praise for His humility, He who sanctifies all,
when He is baptized with sinners.

John contemplates the mystery of the Trinity
at the baptism of the Son of God in the river Jordan:
the Son as He is baptized, the Spirit as He descends on Him,
and the Father who cries out: This is My Son, My Beloved.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord.... Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the one true God, Lord and Maker of all, True and Primordial Light, to Him who alone is the Inaccessible and Imperishable Light, to Him who is resplendent in all and glorious in all, in trinity and unity and eternity. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Christ our God, Redeemer and Deliverer of us all, who by Your Glorious Epiphany gave light to the world...When You saw our race grown weak through sin and alienated from Your friendship... You did not forsake us, but by various disciplines and by wondrous signs You dealt with us for our correction. You spoke to us through the prophets, You revealed Yourself to the sages and You gave us the law, but we remained in disobedience. At the end of time, then, You descended in

Your own person to us in our poverty and became one of us, like us and for us, while You took on our diseases and paid our debts... You came of Your own will to the river Jordan for our sake and You hallowed the baptism for our pardon, that by it we may be cleansed and delivered from death and corruption, and blessed by the glorious light of the Trinity, and counted worthy to become children of the Heavenly Father by the power of the Holy Spirit. For all these we rejoice and exult in the salvation which has come to us through You, Christ our God, and we lift up our hearts and say: With You is the fountain of life and in Your light we see the light.

And while we remember these wonderful and glorious things which You have done for us, Lord, we celebrate the holy festival of Your glorious Epiphany and Your sacred Baptism with great joy. We beg that Your mercy may continually rest upon us and that You will forgive, Lord, all that we have sinned against You and forget it, in the abundance of Your loving kindness. Confirm our souls in faith and fill us with hope and love. Deliver us from shameful passions and enticements to sin and error. Strengthen us in the keeping of Your holy commands, that by good deeds and honest behaviour, the gift which we received in Your holy Baptism, by which we were made sons may be preserved in us. May we be truly holy temples and beloved sons like You. May all our lives and actions be pleasing to Your Majesty. And we and our departed will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn for the Light of lights

Light which shone from the Father
in the womb of the Virgin, a daughter of man,
Your Epiphany shines upon the waters when You come to baptism.
The Church runs in haste who longs for You.
She thirsts for the image made in the house of the Father.
She is made captive to Your love,
as she believes that You are the Son of God.
All glorify You who have enlightened the earth by Your rays
and made the nations who were dispersed to return,
and taught them the mystery of the Trinity.

From the Father appeared the Light to us
and it enlightens the world with its rays.
The nations which were led astray by false worship
understand the way of life on seeing Him come to baptism,
who pardons sins and forgives offences.
He humbles Himself to the size of man, a poor man.
Glory to His humiliation whom the Wakeful Ones cannot contemplate.
In baptism, the chaste John, the son of the barren,
places the hand upon His head.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Blessed are You, Light of lights
who enlighten the world with Your rays
and by Your teaching make the nations to return to the way of life.
You choose the Church for Your bride in the midst of the water
and purify her defilement,
and call the peoples and nations for Your wedding feast,
and You cause Yourself to be baptized,
and You become her Bridegroom in purity.
Blessed are You who humbled Your majesty for our sake,
that by Your humiliation we might find rest.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The Son of Life who became man comes to be baptized.
The son of the barren, trembling, obeys under constraint.
Then he sees the Light shine.
He hears the voice of the Father coming from the highest heaven.
He contemplates the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove
descending and resting on Him.
Glory to His humiliation
who by His baptism sanctifies the waters
and opens to the children of Adam the gate
by which they are purified and become heirs of His Kingdom.

Prayer of Incense

Fair Dawn who dawned from the Father, the Creator of the light,
to give light to those who were living in the darkness of untruth,

receive from us sinners this fragrant incense
which we make to ascend before You.

In Your love for humankind
make to shine upon us the light of Your countenance
and hallow us by the grace of Your baptism,
Christ our God, now and for ever.

Hymn for the Baptism of our Lord

In the river Jordan John contemplates a marvel:
the angels sing and the Fiery Ones cry: Holy!
The Holy Spirit descends and rests on the head of the Son.
A voice is heard from on high: This is My Son. This is My Beloved.
Blessed are You who descended to clothe Adam with the waters of baptism.

In the river Jordan the Son of God is baptized.
The companies of the Wakeful Ones seeing it marvel,
and are seized with fear and trembling.
The Lord of the heights and the depths who was made man is there
and is baptized by the hand of His servant,
He who is the Lord of all.
Glory to Him who was so humiliated for our human race.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

John saw the Life-giving Lamb of God who asked to be baptized by him.
He answered and said to Him: You are the Christ, God.
It is by Your hands that the worlds were fashioned.
How shall You be baptized by me a creature of earth and dust?
Glory to the Father who sent You while You did not leave Him.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The Spirit flew from the heights in the form of a dove
and rested on the head of the Son,
to point Him out to all as with a finger.
A voice came from on high: This is My Son. This is My Beloved.

Blessed is He who for the children of Adam
sanctifies baptism for the forgiveness of sins,
and gives us His body for food
and His blood, the chalice of salvation.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth,
give her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

The fire of Your love incites us to praise Your Epiphany.
Truly astounding, it floods with light those who contemplate it.
The splendour of the mystery takes hold of us,
as we contemplate Your Epiphany, O You who were pleased
to manifest Yourself in a body from a daughter of David.

At the sight of You the Jordan took fire with love,
when You came to be baptized, that each one might know
the baptism with fire. The waters took fire
with flashes of fire, when the Living Fire
came to plunge Himself there in baptism.

When the Son of the King plunged in the waters to be baptized
the clouds were rent asunder like the veil of the house of the King,
when the Son walked the path of obedience all the way to death.
The voice of the Father resounded from on high: This is My Beloved.
And the Spirit descended and gave witness that it was He.

Glory to the Father who sent His Son to the earthly ones.
Adoration to the Son who was baptized in the Jordan by John
and to the Holy Spirit who pointed Him out to the crowds,
as with a finger. And may graciousness be poured out upon us,
on this festival and at all times.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The waters saw You, O God,
the waters saw You and trembled.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The skies sent forth their voice.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Praise, glory and exaltation we offer,
to the One who is Resplendent, Powerful and Glorious,
and raised above all heights,
for the victory granted to His people,
while Miriam sings on the timbrel and the lute:
The Lord is God.

Sing, sing, sing, sing and sing,
of the Mighty God who came to baptism.

Praise, praise, praise, praise and praise,
the Strong God who came to baptism.

Chant, chant, chant, chant and chant,
El Shaddai who has come to baptism.

Because He is worthy of praise.

Mark 1:1-11 Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist.

Intercessions

As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us pay attention
and answer all together with joy and thanksgiving:
Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were baptized by John as a son of man, and received from the Father a testimony as the Son of God, the beloved, and were revealed to the people by the Holy Spirit, prompt Your Churches to manifest You truly in the world, we beseech You.

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, upon whom the Holy Spirit who in the beginning flew away and left humankind, now descended as on the head of the race of Adam, and You bestowed Him upon us, pour out Your Spirit on the human family, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were baptized in the river to deliver the sons of Adam from their sins, the sins of individuals and of society, prompt our leaders and rulers to dedicate themselves to the service of the millions of India, and strengthen them in their task of putting an end to crying inequalities, by providing dignity of life and true freedom to all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all human beings, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, be beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

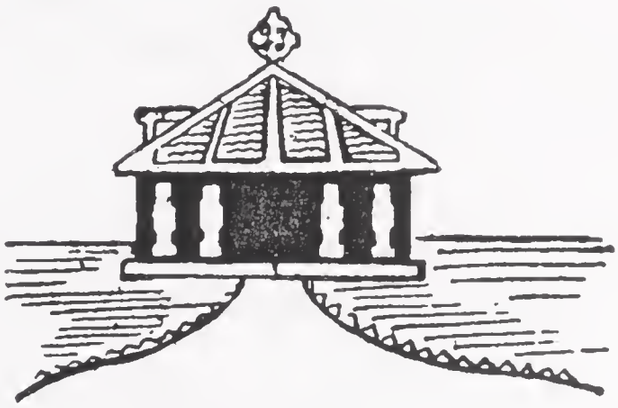
Concluding Prayer

Enlighten, Lord, our minds with the light of Your knowledge, on this holy and glorious day of lights and on all the days of our life, Christ our true God, light that comes into the world and shines on all humankind, we beseech You and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P.6

MEDITATION



Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you ...P.7

Response

With those from on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we offer thanksgiving to You and we praise You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

At the baptism of the Son, heaven and earth rejoice and sing praise
to the Father who sent His Belolved Son for our salvation.
To Him be glory, the Saviour of the whole creation.

The Holy Spirit descends and rests on Him in the form of a dove.
The voice of the Father is heard: Behold, My Son, My Beloved.
To Him be glory, the Saviour of the whole creation.

Let us offer thanksgiving and adoration
to the Great Light appearing to us by the river Jordan.
By its appearance it dispels the gloom of untruth
and clothes us with an armour from the waters of baptism.

It is good to offer praise and glory, adoration and highest honour,
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
One true God, to Him be glory.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 47 (46) All peoples, clap your hands...

Response

All peoples, clap your hands,
cry to God with shouts of joy!
The Lord, the Most High, we must revere,
Great King over all the earth...
Sing praise for God, sing praise,
sing praise to our King, sing praise.

He who with the Father and the Holy Spirit
is praised in the highest heaven by the spiritual ones,
is approved by testimony in the river Jordan,
by the voice of the Father and the descent of the Spirit.
Glory to Him who is one in three,
in the heights and in the depths, without being limited.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the one Eternal Godhead, one Glorious Trinity today revealed to the people on earth, the Holy Father by a sound, the Noble Son by a touch, the Adorable Spirit by a sight; the Father, a wondrous light, the Son, the brightness of glory, the Spirit, the manifestation of His greatness. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Glory to You and thanks to You, Fair and Mystic Light which gave joy to the world by Your manifestation; Lofty One, High above all, who by Your descent raised up on high those who were below... Good One, hidden above all, who were manifested by the river Jordan in Your love; Pure One, pure above all, at whose baptism the heavens were opened; Word, adorable above all, to whom the Father bore witness by His voice; Holy One, who hallow all, who were revealed by the descent of the Spirit; Lord by whom the servant who baptized You was magnified;

Heavenly Bridegroom by whom the Bride who was betrothed to You was made pleasing... Only Son who made us Your brothers by Your grace... What thanks or honour are sufficient for this goodness towards our race? Of what presents are You in need which may be presented to You by us, O Compassionate One, You...who fill all things by Your divine power?

Therefore... we beg and beseech You, fill us all with Your divine light. Inflame us with the abundance of the fire of Your holy love. Fix in our hearts the remembrance of Your name. Grant that we may keep without stain the image of Your likeness which is in us and restore it to its divine beauty. Give to the faithful departed a dwelling in the Jerusalem which is above, that from the living and the dead there may rise to You eternal praise and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

John mixes the waters of baptism and Christ hallows them
when He descends in them and is baptized.
At that moment, when He comes up out of the water
heaven and earth give Him honour,
sun and moon offer adoration and the clouds praise Him
who hallows all rivers and fountains, halleluia,
on the day of His baptism.

Come, beloved, let us go and see the tree
planted beside the running water, its leaves never fall,
and in its branches dwells the dove, the Holy Spirit.
Its roots reach out to the waters of baptism,
sinners descend in them and are baptized
and they come out purified, halleluia,
and are enrolled in the Book of Life.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

When our Lord said to John: Come and baptize Me,
he replied: I am afraid, Lord, You are a Live Fire
and I am fashioned out of dust, how can I lay hold on the Fire?
But the Lord said to him: Do lay your hand on My head.
A voice was heard from heaven and the Spirit hovered over Him,
halleluia, to Him be glory.

From age to age and for ever. Amen

Today the waters are mixed and the Bride consents
to be sanctified by baptism in the waters of the river Jordan.
People gather and angels hasten to the river ablaze with fire,
for God has come down and stands in the flow of the waters.
All rivers and fountains are hallowed, halleluia, halleluia.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 65(64) To You our praise is due....

Response

To You our praise is due... O God...
To You all flesh will come,
with its burden of sin.
Too heavy for us, our offences,
but You wipe them away in baptism.

Praise to Him who was pleased to be baptized by His servant
in the waters of the river Jordan.
The sea saw it and trembled at the brightness of the Divinity,
and the people cried out and said:
Praise Him and exalt Him for ever and ever.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Unsearchable God, who while He is one God is praised and worshipped in trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and while He is three is reckoned as one God, from whom and by whom and through whom is the establishment of all that was and that will be in heaven and on earth. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

God, Word, Only-begotten, whose eternal coming forth from the Father is from everlasting, even as the ray of the sun comes forth from its sphere by nature, Lord who descended from heaven softly like the rain and were seen by the river in open manifestation, Resplendent One whose rays of light remove the darkness from the world and who by the manifest splendour of Your Economy give light to all the world perfectly... You who are without need were baptized in the river Jordan and left in it the garment of immortality for those who were naked that they might be clothed with it. Today indeed the glorious river has been enriched to bring forth wondrously spiritual children who shine like stars in heaven...Today is accomplished what David said: Deep calls to deep, that they may be blessed by the waters of baptism of the Saviour. Today the thirst of the creation is quenched when the Lord of the waters is manifested by the river, and cries out that all who thirst should be satisfied by Him...

We therefore Your servants, Lord.....glorify Your love of humankind. We give thanks to You for all the works of Your grace and we ask of You that You will show forth the light of Your countenance upon us that we may be delivered from the oppression of sin. Fill us with the grace which is stored up for the children and write our names and those of our departed in the Book of the Firstborn in heaven. Establish our walking in Your ways, confirm our thoughts in Your hope, and make to dwell in us wonder at Your love. Stir up in us marvelling at Your manifestation, that we may thank and worship and praise You, Lord, and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn *Soghitho*

My mind brought me to the Jordan
and I saw wonders revealed there:
the Glorious Bridegroom who prepares
the wedding feast for His bride and sanctifies her.

I saw John filled with wonder
in the midst of crowds gathered all around him,
while the Bridegroom Messiah bent down
before the son of the barren to be baptized.

My mind was filled with wonder
by the Word and by the voice,

John the voice and our Lord the Word,
who came to reveal that which was hidden.

The betrothed bride did not recognize
the Bridegroom for whom she looked,
also the friends of the Bridegroom
among whom our Lord was hiding.

Then the Bridegroom revealed Himself
when He came to John near the river.
The Forerunner trembled and said of Him:
Here is the Bridegroom whom I proclaim.

He came to baptism, He who baptizes all,
and manifested Himself at the river.
As John recognized Him, he withdrew his hand,
and beseeched Him saying:

My Lord, how can You be baptized by me,
You who by Your baptism atone for all?
It is the river which looks to You for baptism.
Sprinkle it with the fullness of Your holiness.

Our Lord said to John: It is My wish.
Come near and baptize Me, it is My will.
Please, do not resist.
I wish to be baptized by you.

I beseech You, my Lord, do not compel me.
What You ask is very hard for me.
It is I who need to be baptized by You,
who by the hyssop of Your purity purify all.

I pray, John, do not displease Me.
Let it be as I will. Why do you argue?
Always do what is right; and come near, to baptize Me.
It is for this that I stand here.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth,
give her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

The fire of Your love incites us to praise Your Epiphany.
Truly astounding, it floods with light those who contemplate it.
The splendour of the mystery takes hold of us,
as we contemplate Your Epiphany, O You who were pleased,
to manifest Yourself in a body from a daughter of David.

At the sight of You the Jordan took fire with love,
when You came to be baptized, that each one might know
the baptism with fire. The waters took fire
with flashes of fire, when the Living Fire
came to plunge Himself there in baptism.

When the Son of the King plunged in the waters to be baptized
the clouds were rent asunder like the veil of the house of the King,
when the Son walked the path of obedience all the way to death.
The voice of the Father resounded from on high: This is My Beloved.
And the Spirit descended and gave witness that it was He.

Glory to the Father who sent His Son to the earthly ones. Adoration to the Son who was baptized in the Jordan by John and to the Holy Spirit who pointed Him out to the crowds, as with a finger. And may graciousness be poured out upon us, on this festival and at all times.

Hymn of Saint Athanasius As the angels... P.15

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P. 6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 7

Praises of John the Baptist[31]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord God, that by the prayers of Your preacher, John the Great Forerunner who baptized You, we may be cleansed from all stains of sin and always bear in our lives fruits of true repentance, with love for You and for one another, our Lord and our God for ever. Amen.

Psalm 15 (14) Lord, who shall be admitted to Your tent...

Response

Glorious and Holy Mysteries are seen in the river Jordan.
The Baptist announces the coming of the Messiah and points to Him.
He makes known the Saviour of all and shows who He is:
Behold, among you stands one whom you do not know.
He is the Lord and God above all gods.
We worship Him as we cry out:
Blessed are You, Lord, the Strong, God of our Fathers.

You filled all the people with wonder by your preaching,
baptist and messenger and accomplisher of heroic deeds.
You revealed the Life-giving Lamb of God at baptism
the King of glory, Lord and Creator of all creatures.
We worship Him as we cry out:
Blessed are You, Lord, the Strong, God of our fathers.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

Lord God, in our sorrow we cry to You.
In Your goodness hear us, Lord.

In Your graciousness purge our guilt,
and make us worthy of Your Kingdom on the day of Your coming,
that we may sing Your praise
with the glorious companies of Your saints.

Blessed is He who chose you, O Preacher of Truth.
He was baptized by your own hands
and He made you His voice before His coming to proclaim and cry out:
Behold, after me comes the King, Christ.
Come, let us bow down and adore Him.

Christ is baptized by the hands of His servant,
the Preacher of Truth, John, the son of the barren,
whose memory is glorious in the four quarters of the earth.
Behold, the Church whom he made the Bride of Christ
sings praise on the day of his festival.

Blessed are You, Jesus, who descended in the river Jordan
to be baptized by the Preacher of Truth,
John, the voice of the Word.
Behold, his memory is glorious in the Holy Church.
By his prayers, be gracious to us and to the whole world.

Blessed are you, chosen one and Preacher of Truth,
who were worthy to baptize the Life-giving Lamb of God.
You heard the voice of the Father
and you baptized the Uniquely Beloved Son
and you saw the Holy Spirit in bodily form as a dove
descending and resting upon Him.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Heavenly High Priest who is baptized by the hands of an earthly priest and by His baptism gives light to the whole creation. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

We praise you, O prophet of the Exalted One and messenger of the Most High, powerful forerunner of the Lord, hero and lofty voice of the

sublime Word, preacher of truth and apostle of election, friend of the Bridegroom of the Holy Bride, companion of the Heavenly Bridegroom, pure dove who came to us from the desert and murmured the praise of the Church of true believers, swallow who announced the joys of summer, tongue which spoke of divine things, harp which at the marriage feast of the Bride of the King gave forth the sound of joyous songs and with the tongue of the Holy Spirit preached salvation to the world, lamp of daytime which was kindled before the light of the Gospel, star of bright rays which made known the full splendour of the sun, fair priest who extended your right hand over the Great High Priest and placed your hand on the head of the Forgiver of sins.

For all these we beseech you, who are the pride and glory of the redeemed, the house of refuge and helper of the penitent, that you will intercede for us with the Saviour of the world who was baptized by you, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, according to your joyous witness, that He may take away from us now also the burden of our sins and the weary load of our faults. May He give light to our minds and prepare and make straight in the valley of our hearts the way of truth and the paths of righteousness. May He fill the depths of our consciousness with the riches of His spiritual gifts that with you and all His saints we may offer praise and thanksgiving to Him and to His Father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

May your memory be kept for ever, O Preacher of Truth,
who grew up in the desert to prepare the way of the Truth.
You brought to the Holy Church the good news
concerning the Heavenly Bridegroom, and behold, today,
in all the Churches praises resound from the people in memory of you.
Glory to Him who magnifies and honours your great deeds for ever.

The angels marvel how much you are exalted, John,
who in the river lay your hand on the head of the Flame.
They offer blessings to the race of Adam
whose hand was raised to anoint their Lord.
They offer thanksgiving to the Good Lord
who humbled Himself and became flesh

and in His love took us to Himself
and in His greatness united us with Himself.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Of all the children born of women, none is greater than John,
prophet, preacher, disciple who gives baptism to his Lord,
the voice who cries in the name of the Son
that the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.
Glory to the Uniquely Beloved Son who filled him with the Spirit
when he was still confined in the womb
and who sent him before Himself to prepare the way for His coming.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glorious ascetic, John the Levite, hero who did wonders,
from your early years you were brought up in the desert.
Your food was of roots and herbs.
You became the Preacher of the Hidden One
who was coming to be manifested.
And you announced to the Holy Church
that the Heavenly Bridegroom has come.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Voice of the Everlasting Word,
Shining Lamp before the Only Light,
Messenger going before the Heavenly King,
be an intercessor on our behalf
to beseech your Lord who hears you, that by your prayers
He may remit our debts and forgive our offences.

May He receive our incense and our service
by your intercession, that we and our departed, with you,
may be worthy of the happiness of the Heavenly Kingdom
and we will offer praise and thanksgiving
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
who magnifies you, now and always and for ever.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, John the Baptist,
may your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayers and be gracious to all.

By your prayers may the Lord remove all harm and evil
from all who seek refuge in you with faith.

We feel greatly inspired to speak of John.
He was a man not of one gift but of many charisms.
We call him prophet but we find him among the apostles.
We count him with the apostles but his lot was that of the martyrs.

He was great among the priests.
But with him the Law is fulfilled and comes to an end.
From his time forth, the priesthood of Levi becomes obsolete.
He was born of a daughter of Aaron in the flesh,
but like Melchizedek he offered sacrifices spiritually.

He who was circumcised according to the Old Law,
with the New Law reveals a circumcision not made by hands.
He is the dividing line between the two Covenants:
while setting the seal on the first
he inaugurates the Covenant of Truth.

Glory to the Father who chose for His Son the son of the barren.
Adoration to the Son who was baptized by him in the river Jordan.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who adorned him with all beauty.
And on us God's graciousness, by his prayers. Amen. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The mouth of the just speaks wisdom.
His tongue declares judgement.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Of all the children born of women
there is none greater than John.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 3: 22 - 30 John's ultimate witnessing to Christ.

Intercessions

As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us stand well and pay attention and answer all together with joy and cheerfulness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who endowed John the Baptist with the spirit and power of Elijah, give us to experience the joy that came to him when he said of You to his own disciples: He must grow greater and greater and I must grow less and less, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who kindled a lamp in the world that it might give light before You, the Light of the Nations, renew Your Churches that they may radiate before all people the radiant light of Your Gospel, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N....Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N..our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all human beings, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Kindle, Lord, the light of Your Word in our minds and make the radiance of Your Epiphany shine in our hearts and all over the world, that the darkness of sin which breeds in it hunger and want may be dispelled by the spirit of restraint, justice and love, preached by John the Baptist, we beseech You and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you ...P.7

Response

Awaken us to sing praise to You with the Wakeful Ones, vigilantly,
You, the Wakeful One who do not sleep
and whom the Wakeful Ones and angels serve unceasingly.

Glory to You, our Saviour. Glory to You and adoration to Your Lordship.
Glory to You who make us worthy
to sing praise to You with the Wakeful Ones.

On this day of the remembrance of John, the Preacher of Truth,
all creatures rejoice, and with them we offer praise
to Christ who magnifies his victory.

John exercised his ministry
through prophecy, priesthood and martyrdom.
To him blessing and praise, and to the Lord who chose him, all glory.

On the day of the feast of John the Forerunner,
we offer praise to Christ who magnifies him,
and to the Father and to the Holy Spirit.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 1 Happy indeed is the man...

Response

Happy indeed is the man
who takes his delight in the law of the Lord,
who ponders over it day and night.
He is like a tree planted near flowing waters.
Its fruit comes in due season and its leaves never fade.

You are a messenger who brings great joy to the Churches,
O Preacher of Truth, when you cry out to the crowd:
I baptize with water, but He will baptize and sanctify
all nations with fire and the Holy Spirit.
Him we praise and extol above all with glory, the God of our fathers.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Word of God made man who adorned His messenger with all spiritual gifts and ennobled His forerunner with all charisms and exalted His preacher with all praises. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ our God, Fountain of all blessings, Stream of holiness, Unfathomable Sea of wisdom and Perennial Spring of knowledge You filled with Your All Holy Spirit Your holy prophets who, from generation to generation, announced Your birth in the flesh, and sowed the seed of life, but fell asleep without seeing You with the eye of the flesh, though they longed for You and awaited You. When at the end of time, You came to birth taking flesh from a woman without ceasing to be God, while You were dwelling in the womb of Your Virgin mother in the fulfilment of a human birth, You kindled by the fiery heat of Your Godhead John the son of the barren, while he was in the womb of his mother Elizabeth, so that he leaped and rejoiced before You and acknowledged that You are true God. After that, when You came to human birth and

advanced in growth as a man, he did not cease to proclaim Your Godhead high above all understanding. He prepared the way before You. He gave You the Church in marriage whom he captivated by the sweetness of his voice and enticed by his preaching, while he continually cried out to her: Behold, there comes one after me who is mightier than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. And when he saw You come to baptism, he cried out to the people openly: This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and redeems it. You made him worthy therefore to place his hand on Your life-giving head, that You might bestow on us the baptism of new birth and the pledge of new life. Again as he rebuked the cruel Herod for his wicked behaviour, he was put into prison... and on the king's birthday amidst revelling and drinking, his godlike head was cut off and brought on a dish to the guests. Then he entered the house of the dead and announced to them the resurrection and life and good hope of salvation.

Therefore, we beseech Your love of humankind that You will grant us to praise the day of his all glorious memory, while we offer pure praise to You with the company of the prophets like whom he prophesied, and bless You with the apostles like whom he preached... We will exalt and glorify You with the noble martyrs with whom he was united and like whom he received the crown of blood. And we all, with him and like him, will praise You and exalt You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The prophets announced your coming before your Lord,
as a messenger of peace to baptize the Son of your Lord.
Today the Holy Church rejoices in Him whom you baptized,
Christ the Bridegroom who invited you to His marriage feast.

On your glorious feast and holy commemoration, O John,
heaven and earth rejoice and all beings offer praise.
On the day of your holy festival,
the children of the earthly Adam receive help.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Glory to Him who sent you to preach His Gospel to the creation.
Your memory is honoured and celebrated all over the world,

priest, prophet and apostle who baptized your Lord,
and were found worthy to place your hand on His head.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Happy are you, John, among all the sons of women.
In the whole world there is not one like you,
for on the day of your birth were opened
your father's mouth and your mother's womb that were shut.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 5 To my words give ear, O Lord...

Response

Lord, You hate all who do evil,
but You bless the just.
You shelter those who love Your name,
and surround them with favour.

Rise, O Church, and sing praise
and offer thanksgiving to Christ
who exalts the memory of His preacher
in heaven and on earth.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to Him who adorned His forerunner with all spiritual gifts, and exalted His messenger with all wonders, and ennobled His preacher with all charisms, and made his festival glorious in all Churches. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ, Fountainhead of all feasts and Fulfilment of all festivals, God of gods and Lord of lords, when You saw that man was estranged from You and deprived of celebrating You in festivals on account of sin, and bound to a crude way of life, and by the deceit of the Serpent unable to enjoy these festivals which give delight in God, You then who are good and who have compassion on what You have fashioned, You could not endure that he should be lost. You ordained that You should become man to heal Your creature, and again You ordained an Economy and with that Economy festivals which should bring healing to him. We today are assembled to keep festival in memory of John the Baptist like to whom there has not been anyone born of woman. We acknowledge him to be a Joshua who saw the Jordan not parted from side to side but passing from one dispensation to another. He is a Gideon who raised from the water those who fight, not with flesh and blood but with evil spirits. He is a Samuel who did not anoint David but baptized the Son of David; a David who was not persecuted by Saul but was slain by Herod; an Elijah who was supported not by a raven but by locusts and honey; a Joseph who incurred the spite not of Potiphar but of Herodias; an Elisha who did not increase the oil but by whom people were anointed; an Isaiah who did not say: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a child, but: Behold, the virgin has conceived, she bears the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Therefore, Lord God, who have called us to this sublime and divine festival, we beseech Your graciousness that You will not close Your ears to these prayers which we offer to You through him, but that You will accept them and grant that this festival may be for us the supplier of all needs, a festival which gives us the pardon of our sins and makes us grow in holiness, a festival which announces peace, a festival which proclaims tranquillity, a festival which sows concord, a festival which is a harbour of joy, a festival which brings gladness, a festival which invites us and our departed believers to the place which is beyond corruption and beyond all that can be conceived, that there we and they may offer praise and thanksgiving with our whole being, to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The child of promise grew up in the wilderness,
and had grown strong in spirit when he began to preach:

Be converted, be baptized and bear fruits of repentance.
Clothe the naked, feed the hungry and revere all creatures.
All humankind must see God's salvation.

Who then are you, John, if you are not the Christ?
Are you Samson or Samuel, like you children of promise,
for like them you drink no wine?
Are you Jeremiah or Elijah with your cloth of camel's hair?
I am the voice that prepares the way of the Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

He who comes after me takes rank before me,
I am not even worthy to untie the straps of His sandals.
I saw the Spirit resting on Him like a dove.
He is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

John rose before the Sun, as the morning star,
and when the Sun had risen, he did not want to be seen.
The Son to whom the Spirit is not given with measure,
from whose fullness we all have received must increase.
And we must decrease and be transfigured by His light.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O John the Baptist,
may your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayers and be gracious to all.

By your prayers may the Lord remove all harm and evil
from all who seek refuge in you with faith.

Who is able to speak fairly of John,
who was filled with spiritual gifts?
A man of divine purity and lofty asceticism,
the messenger of peace sent to prepare the way of his Lord!

Human words cannot do justice to your beauty,
only the words of the Lord can witness to your grace.
You are a holy temple, a precious incense of sweet fragrance,
at all times reconciling the Lord with His creation.

Star of first rank when you call the peoples to repentance,
your brightness illumines the four quarters of the earth.
Friend of the Bridegroom who baptized your Lord,
among the children born of women none is greater than you.

Glory to the Father who chose for His son, the son of the barren.
Adoration to the Son who was baptized by him in the river Jordan.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who adorned him with all beauty.
And on us God's graciousness, by his prayers. Amen. Amen.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.,... P. 6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 8

Stephen Firstborn of the Martyrs[32]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Firstborn of the martyrs and prince of the athletes, Stephen, while you endured stoning to death by the envy of the wicked, you offered prayers to Christ for them that their sins might not be laid to their charge. Obtain for this community which celebrates your festival now, that we may always stand fearlessly in giving witness to the Gospel while forgiving all harm which may be done to us, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 21 (20) O Lord, Your strength gives joy....

Response

Your strength, O Lord, gives joy to Your martyrs,
they rejoice in Your victory.
You have granted Stephen his heart's desire,
You have fulfilled the prayer of his lips.

Mother of purity, Holy Virgin,
we offer praise to you, on the day of the remembrance
of Stephen the Deacon, firstborn of the martyrs
and great witness to the love of your Son.

Gnashing their teeth murderously like wild beasts,
the wicked fell upon Stephen and killed him,
while he was singing, full of holiness,
O God, You are blessed for ever.

Stephen the Deacon, received the stones
from those who were stoning him
like flowers of many colours and of great beauty.
In his person he offered sacrifice to Christ, the Giver of Life,
as he cried out: O God, You are blessed for ever.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

Glory to You, Lord, who made the martyrs drunk with Your love
and they bore the passion and tortures,
of whom Stephen appears the first and the head.
By his prayers, may Your graciousness be on us all.

Stephen, chosen one and first of the martyrs,
how did you despise that dreadful death?
I saw Christ at the right hand of His Father,
standing in glory and weaving crowns for the combatants.

Like our Lord on the Cross
praying and asking pardon for those who crucified Him,
Stephen was praying to his Lord for those who were stoning him:
Do not hold this sin against them.

We remember in prayer all believers departed from this life.
We do not forget those who have departed from our midst.
We commemorate their names at the altar
that they may rest in everlasting peace.

Glory, thanksgiving, honour and adoration,
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one God who gave strength to Saint Stephen, the chosen one.
By his prayers may God's graciousness be on us all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the First of Martyrs who caused the proto-martyr, Stephen, to be the first witness to His love, the Author of the glorious combat in whose footsteps Stephen the head of the martyrs walked first. To Him who makes martyrdom glorious, we pray that He may grant us to celebrate joyfully the memory of His beloved one for the good of our souls, at this time of evening...

Christ our God who crown the spiritual athletes and glorify the holy martyrs, Your beloved who were killed for You, You made Stephen the Deacon walk gloriously through this royal way. While he was stoned for Your holy name he cheerfully witnessed to Your love, praying that this sin may not be laid to the charge of his persecutors, according to the teaching of the Gospel which he received from You, O Giver of true wisdom. While we celebrate the remembrance of the firstborn and head of the martyrs with praises and songs of the Holy Spirit we say: Stephen, noble athlete, you were stoned for the Kingdom of Heaven and were made worthy of the sublime crown of martyrdom. Stephen, you saw the heavens opened and Jesus, God, standing at the right of His Father. Stephen, whose crown was revealed when you were crowned, you were ennobled and made glorious by true martyrdom. Stephen, when the fire which our Lord set on earth began to burn in your heart, you gave up cheerfully all the good things of this world. Stephen, fair jewel of the crown of the Holy Church, you rejoice in the company of Christ the King, according to His true promise: Where I am, there also my servants will be.

Therefore we beseech You, Lord, as You armed Your martyr with truth and strengthened him in his combat, arm us too with fortitude of mind and fearlessness in the face of trials that like him we be imitators of the sufferings of Your passion, and we will praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Stephen, firstborn of the martyrs, filled with the Holy Spirit
you prayed for those who were stoning you
that our Lord might forgive them,
as your Lord prayed on the Cross for His crucifiers.
Intercede for us all that we may meet trials with faith,
that with you we may take our delight
at the bridal feast of light and joy.

Stephen, firstborn of the martyrs, raised his eyes
and by the grace of the Holy Spirit saw heaven open
and the Son of man standing at the right of Him who sent Him
while wicked people stoned him to death,
jealous as they were of the beauty of his way of life.
And he left for the marriage chamber of joys,
and behold, today his memory is illustrious.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

O Stephen, pearl without flaw,
you carried off the victory by being stoned to death
and now you rejoice in the place of life
in the marriage chamber of light and of joy.
Your memory is celebrated in the Holy Church of believers.
Your death offered for the creation
was more pleasing than all fragrant spices.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed is He who chose you and called you to His service,
O noble and fair Stephen, to be faithful
in the mysteries and secrets of the house of God.
Wicked people envied you for your beautiful way of life
and they stoned you to death, the evil doers.
Your memory is glorious in the four quarters of the earth.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Son who are sitting at the right hand of your Father,
You manifested Your fair glory to Stephen the Deacon,
head of the glorious martyrs, prince of the athletes.
You armed him with truth and strengthened him in the combat.

By the fragrance of this incense which we offer to You,
arm us also with fortitude of mind and unshakable courage,
that we may be imitators of the sufferings of Your saints,
and with them, all together, praise You, O Lord of martyrs
and strength of those who obtain the victory.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O Stephen the Deacon,
may your prayer always be with us,
and kindle in our hearts the flame of perfect love.

By your prayers, glorious deacon, firstborn of the martyrs,
may the Lord reveal to us the depth of His mysteries
and prompt us to witness to Him fearlessly.

O Stephen, pearl of invaluable beauty,
radiating from all sides on those who look at it,
noble and glorious, vigilant and diligent in your service,
in you the Gospel is fulfilled, beautifully accomplished.

Doer of mighty deeds, noble and full of beauty,
endowed with a perceptive knowledge and understanding of reality,
the faith of the Holy Spirit filled you entirely.
You are a hero, on account of your signs and wonders.

This is how love is greater than faith and hope:
as he is stoned he prays for those who stone him.
He was the first to show the path of imitation of the full passion.
Blessed is He who gave him the crown of victory.

Glory to the Father who gave victory to the first martyr.
Adoration to the Son for whose love he endured death by stoning.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who made his face radiant.
One nature in three. To Him be praise.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
He will receive a blessing from the Lord
and righteousness from God, our Saviour.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
He is the joy and the power of his Lord
who put on his head the crown of glory.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Matthew 5: 1 - 2 & 38-48 The new law of love.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us give attention and answer all together with love and fortitude: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who by the valiant combat gloriously endured by Your deacon Stephen revealed to Your Church the perfect imitation of Your passion, prompt all Your Churches to be true witnesses to Your Gospel, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who showed to Stephen, head of the martyrs, the heavens opened and Yourself at the right hand side of God, Your Father, reveal to Your disciples the deep mystery of Your life in us, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N... our Bishop, N... our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, and for fostering universal brotherhood among all human beings, beyond distinction of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened among our people in this our country of India and in the whole world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Christ our God, by the intercession of Stephen, head of Your martyrs, that we may never turn aside from the practice of forgiveness taught in Your Gospel, and made illustrious by him, when he was stoned to death. And we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you ...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

The Winged Creatures bless You. The Fiery Ones hallow Your Glory.
The angels and people on earth cry: Holy ! Holy! to You.
Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is the Firstborn who became a model for His friends.
The first to imitate Jesus was Stephen, head of the martyrs.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Stephen gazed intently up to heaven and saw the Son in glory,
standing at the right hand of the Father who sent Him.
And out of love for Him he endured his passion.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him be praise. And on us His graciousness.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 2 Why this tumult among nations....

Response

Why are the nations in turmoil?
Why do the peoples hatch their treacherous plots?
The kings of the earth stand ready
and the rulers conspire together.

The Council of Caiaphas who hanged the Lord on the Cross
gnashed their teeth against His servant and stoned him.
On account of this we all magnify him,
on the great day of his remembrance.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to Him who crowns His athletes and gives honour to His friends, and adorns His Holy Church with the memory of the chosen Stephen, the golden crown which has been placed on her head. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We beseech You, O Firstborn of martyrs and Head of deacons, great Stephen, crowned with beauty, blessed sheaf and firstfruits of the harvest of the new Gospel, who were wholly dedicated as an offering to the Lord; fair fruit which grew from the tree of the Cross and ascended in its freshness to the altar above the world; mystical holocaust laid on an altar of stones and, as it pleased God, were accepted as a sweet odour; fragrant cluster who were the first to ripen in the vineyard of Christ and by your delicious taste even today give pleasure to the angels and people on earth; flower of true faith, lily of sweet scent which grew up in beauty in the garden of Golgotha and bore as fruit, a delicate scent of love of which there is never satiety, conceivable only in Paradise, where fruits never wither; delightful incense which spread the fragrant odour of the passion of Christ all over the world; wondrous athlete at whose crowning the heavens were opened; imitator of your Lord who at the hour of your death prayed for those who put you to death.

Pray, therefore, our Lord for us, poor sinners, that we may never indulge in stoning, that is, throwing to others words which carry offence or harm the love of neighbour. Pray that we may be free from thoughts that destroy their honour and from actions that deprive them of their fundamental rights. Intercede for us that, like you, we may be initiated into the heavenly mysteries and be worthy to stand by your side in the theatre above this world, and with you sing pure praises to the Hidden Father with whose love you were on fire, to the Adorable Son with whose affection you were inflamed, and to the Holy Spirit with whose beauty you were clothed and with whose light you shone, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Stephen, firstborn of the martyrs and head of the deacons,
invites the Holy Church to rejoice on the day of his remembrance.
He calls her people to sing spiritual praises.
Behold, he himself sings praise to the Lord who chose him.

Sweet cluster of grapes, the first of the vineyard of Christ,
which blossomed and ripened on the vine of the Church,
the wicked ones crushed it with stones to spill its juice,
but the Church takes delight in its sweet taste.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As the wicked were hurling stones at the holy one,
he gazed intently up to heaven and beheld the Son of God,
standing in glory at the right hand of the Hidden Father,
holding out for him the linen garment and the crown of glory.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Stephen was filled with faith, hope and love,
but when he was contemplating the glory of God,
his face reflected the brightness of the Lord.
Christ took delight in him and received him in glory.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 11(10) In the Lord I have taken my refuge...

Response

I trust the Lord for safety.
How can you say to me:
Fly away like a bird to the mountains.

Glorious is your commemoration,
Stephen, firstborn of the martyrs.
The heavenly ones and the earthly ones sing praise.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise .. to the Word of God who became man out of love for us, and taught us that it is by love that man enters into communion with God and becomes one with Him. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Truly it is Your love that made You to descend to us, Lord, and love that made Your servant Stephen ascend from earth to heaven. That love about which You taught us by word and deed, shines with great brightness in the firstborn of the martyrs. How did Stephen obtain that crown signified by his name? He had this great love for God and men. Out of love for God he endured valiantly the fury of his stoning, and out of love of neighbour he prayed that the sin of his assailants might not be held against them. In the power of the same love he overpowered Saul who was breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord, obtaining that his persecutor on earth might become his companion in heaven. Today, with Stephen, Paul rejoices in heaven for , where Stephen ascended first when he was stoned under the eyes of Paul, there Paul also ascended assisted by Stephen's prayer.

Therefore we beg of You, O Great Lover of Humankind, make us realize ever more deeply, how love is at the root of all good, and how it is the path and the ladder by which we ascend to heaven and attain You

in the fulfilment of all perfection. Help us to make our way to that ladder and to grip it firmly, never losing hold of it, that all together we may be led to surrender ourselves completely to God's love, not dreading any more to fall into hell, but longing to be taken in Your embrace, and to learn the secrets which Your Holy Spirit reveals to His friends, those who have emptied themselves to become fully open to God and neighbour, and we will praise You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

As the word of God was spreading more widely
some wicked men seeing Stephen full of grace and power,
filled with wisdom and working great miracles,
stirred up the people with the elders and doctors against him.

When the Council decided that he should be stoned,
Stephen gazed intently up to heaven.
Look! he said, I see a great wonder, the glory of the Lord,
and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As they set about stoning him, Stephen called out:
Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And as he was dying
he fell on his knees and cried aloud :
Lord, do not hold this sin against them!
And Saul approved of his murder.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Glory to the Son of God who showed in His own person
how martyrdom is the way and the ladder to heaven.
Blessed Stephen was the first to ascend on it.
Suffering for his Lord by being stoned to death,
he inherited the Kingdom and entered into His glory.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us,
by the prayer of Stephen the firstborn of martyrs.

By the prayer of him who loved You so much,
pardon us and be gracious to the whole world.

Stephen head of the martyrs was stoned to death,
because he confessed Jesus Son of God.
Behold, his memory is greatly honoured
in the Holy Church which he made glorious.
May his prayer always be with us.

Stephen was the first to enter the path.
The martyrs followed in his footsteps
and now they take their delight in the Bridegroom with him,
at the wedding feast that does not come to an end.

He saw Jesus, his Lord,
standing in glory with His Father.
Stephen was inflamed and made drunk with His love,
and endured death for His name.

Glory to the Father who chose you, O glorious martyr Stephen,
and to the Son who manifested Himself to you
and to the Holy Spirit who set a crown on your head.
May your prayer always be with us.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 9 - 13

Ferial Days after the Baptism and Epiphany of our Lord[33]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Christ our God, that we may celebrate this holy festival of lights, the divine Epiphany at Your baptism, in purity and holiness with divine praises, and while You bestow upon us the pardon of our offences, make us always walk in Your light, that we may share with all our people that common life which You share with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 29 (28) O give the Lord you sons of God...

Response

O give the Lord you children of God,
give the Lord glory and power;
give the Lord the glory of His name.

Your love, Lord, reaches to heaven.
Your truth is proclaimed in the vault of heaven.
Your law is the light on our path.

Your justice is like a lofty mountain,
Your judgements like the deep abyss.
Man and beast You save, O God.

Our Lord, how precious is Your love,
the people on earth, Your children, O God,
find refuge under the shelter of Your wings.

They feast on the riches of Your house,
they drink from the stream of Your delight.
In You is the source of life, in Your light we see the light.

Evening Psalms

We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Christ, by Your Epiphany in the river Jordan
You gladdened the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.
O Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Up above the river
stands the Lord of all fountains and rivers.
O Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

From heaven the Father cries out:
This is My Son, the Beloved.
O Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Blessed is Christ who by His baptism
renews the world that has grown old in sin.
O Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Let us offer praise to the Father,
adoration to the Son and thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit.
O Lord, Lord of all, be gracious to all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

On the First and the Third Day

Praise... to the one true God, Lord and Maker of all, True and Primordial Light, to Him who alone is Inaccessible and Imperishable Light, resplendent in all and glorious in all. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening....

Today the Lord Jesus comes to receive baptism. Christ is baptized, not to be sanctified by the waters, but to hallow the waters. By His touch

He consecrates the waves for our baptism, the remission of sins and the enlightenment of the race of Adam. From the moment when the Saviour immerses Himself in the river all the waters are consecrated for our baptism; the source is purified so that all believers may follow Him. And the moment we are baptized we are enlightened. And as we are enlightened, we become children sharing in God's life and immortality. In the Lord's words: I have said, you are Gods and all of you children of the Most High.

Therefore we beg and beseech You, Lord and Light of the world, fill us all with Your divine light, and kindle in our hearts the fire of your holy love. Fix in our inner being the loving remembrance of Your name, that we may keep the image of Your likeness without stain and restore it to its divine beauty, and we will praise You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

On the Second and the Fourth Day

Praise.. to the Unsearchable God who while He is one God is praised and adored in trinity, and while He is three is reckoned as one God. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

As You were baptized, Jesus, and came up out of the water, heaven opened and the Spirit of God descended in the form of a dove and rested upon You. And the Father's voice was heard: This is My Son, My Beloved. The Beloved Son generates love. Jesus of Nazareth called Joseph's son, You are the Only Son, the Divinity clothed in human flesh. This is My Son, My Beloved. You are hungry, You who feed innumerable crowds... You are in pain, You who relieve all pain. You have nowhere to lay Your head, You who hold all things in Your hand. You are stricken, You who through Your baptism bestow freedom on the world. Come then all you peoples to the immortality of baptism, the water which makes you partakers of the Spirit, which waters paradise, and causes the earth to drink, and makes the plants to grow, and regenerates you in life by causing you to be reborn. In that water Christ was baptized and on him the Spirit descended in the form of a dove.

Therefore we beseech You, Lord, we who have gone down with faith into the water of regeneration, make us cast aside the garments of enslavement that we may shine like the sun and radiate righteousness as

when we came up from baptism. Make Your people truly emerge in this world as children of God, the leaven mixed with the flour of humankind till it is all leavened, and the human race becomes truly divine with You, Christ, to whom be glory and dominion with the Most Holy, the Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

On the First Day

Hymn

I saw the Spirit, said John, coming down from heaven
in the form of a gentle dove and resting upon Him,
this is He who is to baptize in the Holy Spirit
that humankind may be born again of God's Spirit.

Here is My servant, said the Lord, whom I uphold,
the Chosen One in whom is all My delight.
I have bestowed on Him the fullness of My Spirit,
for Him to make justice and love shine upon the nations.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

When the Lord of the waters comes up out of the water,
the Holy Spirit comes down and rests upon Him,
for Him to quench the thirst of the creation
that all who are thirsty may be satisfied by Him.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

On Him rests the Spirit of the Lord, Spirit of wisdom,
Spirit of insight and counsel and power, Spirit of knowledge,
to flow freely to those who thirst for Him,
from His body, as from an inexhaustible spring.

O our Saviour, the dead who received Your body at the table of life
and who drank Your precious blood from the chalice of salvation,
raise them up from the grave without corruption
and clothe them in glory, those who have hoped in You.

On the Second Day

Hymn

In His tender love God lowered Himself and descended
and mixed His compassion with the waters
and united His nature of majesty
with the frail body of humankind.
Through the water He comes down and abides in us,
as He came down and dwelt in the womb, in His true love.
Oh the abundance of God's tender love
that seeks all pretexts to persuade Him to abide in us!

The Bride, the Daughter of the nations,
hears the Preacher of Truth, crying out:
Behold, the True Light has come,
who is the radiance of the Eternal Father.
She approaches the Preacher and asks: Where is the Bridegroom,
her Lord, to whom she has been promised?
When will the Resplendent One appear?
I have longed eagerly to meet Him,
that I may find my delight in Him.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Bride saw the Bridegroom who offered Himself at the supper.
She finds joy in the sacrifice of her Spouse
for He gives His body as food for her sake.
She mixes the cup of His blood for her beloved ones.
She bears and carries His Cross.
With it she signs her children for their salvation.
Blessed is the Bridegroom who saves her by His blood.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The vessel once fashioned out of the dust from the soil
is given greater beauty by the water
and it receives power from the fire,
but if it slips and is broken, it cannot be mended.
We are the vessels beautified by water and the Spirit.

We must be treated with care, in righteousness,
for there is no second mending.

Lord our Lord, in Your goodness and graciousness,
remember our dead who were clothed with You at baptism,
who ate Your body and drank Your blood
and who went to sleep and rest in Your hope.
When You come to judge the nations and races,
raise them up and make them enter the bridal chamber
that they may be given a place at Your right hand.

On the Third Day

Hymn

Through the waters of the flood You destroyed evil on earth,
while showing Your love to Noah the Just and his people.
Through the waters of baptism You vanquished sin and death,
may Your love lead us to the banquet of life.

We praise You, Jesus, our Saviour, the One Beloved Son of the Father,
who by Your baptism sanctified the waters for us.
As Naaman was cured of leprosy by a bath in the Jordan,
heai and purify us who dwell in You, O Maker of the Jordan.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Unless man is born anew, says Jesus,
he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.
No one can enter without being born anew of water and Spirit.
Flesh gives birth to flesh, the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Baptism is light, shedding light from the Father of all light.
Baptism is a bridge crossing over from earth to heaven.
Baptism is a stream watering and fructifying our soul.
Baptism is a seed germinating into the Tree of Life.

We make memory of our fathers who, in their lifetime,
taught us to be children of God in this world which passes away.
Son of God, give them rest in the Kingdom of Heaven
with the just, in that world which does not pass away.

On the Fourth Day

Hymn

Blessed are you Mother of Purity, Mother of God,
who bore in virginity the infant who is the Ancient of Days.
In you were accomplished all the prefigurations and mysteries
of which the seers had spoken, the new creation.

You were raised to a height which no man can measure.
Glory to Him who chose you and became an infant in your womb.
He exalts and magnifies your memory in the four quarters of the earth.
May your prayer be a stronghold for us.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

On the day of the baptism of Jesus, O Preacher of Truth,
heaven rejoices and the earth exults,
the Church sings praise and confesses your Lord,
who chose you from the womb and filled you with the Spirit.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

He revealed hidden things and made you His preacher
to prepare the way of His coming. Glory to the Strong One
about whom you made plain to all that He is God.
Behold, He is celebrated on earth as in the highest heaven.

O King and Giver of Life, when You appear in glory from on high
to raise the dead to life and resurrect those who lie buried,
the dead will rise together from their graves
and offer praise to the Life-giving One who raises them up.

Prayer of Incense

Fair Dawn who dawned from the Father, Source of all light,
to enlighten those who were living in darkness,
receive from us sinners this fragrant incense
which we make to ascend in Your presence.

In Your love for humankind
make to shine upon us the light of Your countenance,
and hallow us by the grace of Your baptism,
Christ our God and Saviour.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth,
give her Your peace and keep her people by Your Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

Jesus is baptized. He buried Himself in the river and came up.
When the Lord of all fountains and rivers came up out of the water.
Heaven opened and the Spirit of God was seen in the form of a dove,
descending and resting upon Him.
And the Father's voice was heard from heaven:
You are My Son, My Beloved . In You is all My delight.

The fire of Your love incites us to praise Your Epiphany.
Truly astounding, it floods with light those who contemplate it.
The splendour of the mystery takes hold of us,
as we contemplate Your Epiphany, O You who were pleased
to manifest Yourself in a body from a daughter of David.

At the sight of You the Jordan took fire with love,
when You came to be baptized, that each one might know
the baptism with fire. The waters took fire
with flashes of fire, when the Living Fire
came to plunge Himself there in baptism.

When the Son of the King plunged in the waters to be baptized
the clouds were rent asunder like the veil of the house of the King,
when the Son walked the path of obedience all the way to death.
The voice of the Father resounded from on high: This is My Beloved.
And the Spirit descended and gave witness that it was He.

Glory to the Father who sent His Son to the earthly ones.
Adoration to the Son who was baptized in the Jordan by John
and to the Holy Spirit who pointed Him out to the crowds,
as with a finger. And may graciousness be poured out upon us,
on this festival and at all times.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The waters saw You, O God,
the waters saw You and trembled.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The skies sent forth their voice
and the Spirit descended on You.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

First Day	Mk	1:4-11	John baptizes Jesus
Second Day	Lk	3:15-18 & 21-22	John baptizes Jesus
Third Day	Mt	3:13-17	John baptizes Jesus
Fourth Day	Jn	1:19-34	John's testimony of the baptism of Jesus.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us give attention and answer all together with joy and thanksgiving: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were baptized by John as a son of man and received the Father's testimony as the Son of God, the Beloved, and were revealed to the eyes of the Forerunner by the Holy Spirit, prompt

Your Churches to witness to Your Gospel in the world, uncompromisingly, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were baptized in the river to deliver the children of Adam from their sins, the sins of each one and the sins of society, prompt our leaders and rulers to dedicate themselves to the service of the millions of India, and strengthen them in the task of putting an end to crying inequalities, by providing dignity of life and true freedom to all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Enlighten, Lord, our minds with the light of Your knowledge on this holy and glorious day of lights and on all the days of our life, Christ our true God who enlighten everyone who comes into the world, we beseech You and we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you ...P.7

Response

With those from on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we offer thanksgiving to You and we praise You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

At the baptism of the Son heaven and earth rejoice and sing praise
to the Father who sent His Beloved Son for our salvation.
To Him be glory, the Saviour of the whole creation.

The Holy Spirit descends and rests on Him in the form of a dove.
The voice of the Father is heard: Behold My Son, My Beloved.
To Him be glory, the Saviour of the whole creation.

Let us offer thanksgiving and adoration
to the Great Light appearing to us by the river Jordan.
By its appearance it dispels the darkness of untruth,
and clothes us with an armour from the waters of baptism.

It is good to offer praise and glory, adoration and highest honour,
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
One true God, to Him be glory.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 66 (65) Cry out with joy to God all the earth....

Response

Come and see the works of God,
His tremendous deeds among men...
O peoples, bless our God,
let the voice of His praise resound.
It is He who gives us life and keeps our feet from stumbling.

In the wilderness Moses, the chosen one, and his people
saw great wonders and marvels,
the pillar of fire at night and the cloud above the tent,
and the people would cry out and say:
Praise Him and exalt Him for ever.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the One Eternal Godhead, the One Glorious Trinity today revealed to the people on earth, the Father by a sound, the Noble Son by a touch, the Adorable Spirit by a sight. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Glory to You, and thanks to You, Fair and Hidden Light which gave joy to the world by Your manifestation; Lofty One, high above all, who by Your descent made us Your brothers by grace; Good One, High above all, who were manifested by the river in Your love; Pure One, pure above all, at whose baptism Heaven opened; Word, wonderful above all, to whom the Father bore witness by His voice; Holy One who hallow all, who were revealed by the descent of the Spirit. What thanks and honour are sufficient for this goodness towards our race? Of what presents are You in need which may be presented to You by us, O Compassionate One, You who fill all things by Your divine power?

Therefore, we beg and beseech You, fill us all with Your divine light. Inflame us with the abundance of the fire of Your love. Fix in our hearts the remembrance of Your name. Grant that we may keep without stain the image of Your likeness which is in us and restore its divine beauty, and we will praise You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

As John, the messenger of peace,
was baptizing in the river Jordan, he said:
Behold, after me comes the Life-giving Lamb of God,
the Strong, the Hidden One who bears the whole creation.

The Epiphany from on high radiates light on the earth,
and dispels darkness and makes light rule over it.
Glory to Your humility who became man of Your own will
that in You the mortal ones might find life.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

On the day of Your Epiphany,
glory to the Father who sent You to our race,
You, the Firstborn of life, who came for our salvation.
By You was found the house of Adam which was lost.
They saw Your light and turned away from deceit and untruth.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

John the Preacher of Truth declared:
This is the Life-giving Lamb of God.
This is the Landowner who has come to pull out the weeds
and to gather the grains of wheat in the barns of bliss.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 72(71) O God, give Your judgement to the king...

Response

May there be abundance of corn in the land,
growing in plenty up to the top of the hills.
May the crops flourish like Lebanon
and the sheaves be numberless as blades of grass.
Long may the King's name endure...
and may all nations bless Him without ceasing.

Glory to the Father who in His love sent His Son,
and the Son lowered Himself and put on a body.
He was baptized by John in the river Jordan
to forgive the debts of us all.
The Holy Spirit witnessed of Him that He is the God of all.
May He be gracious to all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Unsearchable God who while He is one God is praised and worshipped in trinity, and while He is three, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, is reckoned as one God. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

God the Word, the One Beloved Son, who descended from heaven softly like the rain and were seen by the river in open manifestation; Resplendent One, whose rays of light removed the darkness from the world and who by the manifest splendour of Your Economy give light to the whole creation, You who are without need were baptized in the river Jordan and left there the garment of immortality for those who were naked, that they might be clothed with it. Today indeed the glorious river has been enriched which brings forth wondrously spiritual children who shine like stars in heaven. Today the thirst of the creation is quenched when the Lord of the waters is manifested by the river, and cries out that all who thirst should be satisfied by Him.

We therefore, Your servants, Lord, glorify Your love of humankind. We give thanks to You for all the works of Your grace. We ask of You that You will show forth the light of Your countenance upon us, that we may be delivered from the oppression of sin. Fill us with Your grace. Confirm our thoughts in Your hope. And make to dwell in us wonder at Your love, that we may thank and worship and praise You, Lord, and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

John's voice was heard when he said to the river Jordan:
Behave well and be cleansed of all the dirt that is in you,
for the Lord of heaven and earth has come
to be baptized in you. Halleluia. To Him be praise.

Today the Sun of Righteousness has dawned upon us,
He whose Name is before the sun.
He illumines all creatures that are in darkness
by His adorable coming forth that shines upon us,
halleluia, from the Daughter of David.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord instituted three mysteries
in the Church which He saved by His baptism:
Baptism, the Eucharist and the noble Priesthood
for the sanctification of His people,
halleluia, blessed is His salvation.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Lamb of God who came to John,
You sanctified the waters by Your baptism
and made peace and tranquillity dwell in the four quarters,
save Your Church and her people from all evil, halleluia.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Son who by Your Epiphany deliver Your Church from untruth,
grant her Your peace and keep her people by the Cross of Light.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

John drew near Jesus and laid his hand on his Maker.
The orders of the Wakeful Ones were terrified.
They sheltered themselves behind each other.
The Powers were astounded by such a wonder,
as the dry leaf held the Live Coal without being burnt.

Those on high marvelled at what was taking place there:
the hand of flesh was not harmed by the Flame.
The Father tore the heavens asunder
and cried out over His Beloved:
This is My Son, do not doubt His coming.

The Flame stood by the side of John who was trembling,
He lowered Himself to be baptized by the earthly one
whom His hands had fashioned.
The Father tore the heavens asunder
and cried out over His Uniquely Beloved Son,
with a voice the like of which had never been heard.

To You be praise, O Purifier of all impurities,
Forgiver of all iniquities who came to be baptized as a guilty one.
All those who are redeemed from their iniquity
by the waters of baptism will praise You, O Lord,
and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

Peace who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth.

Give to Your Churches the joy of peace and unity
and keep their people by the Cross of Light.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

JANUARY 15

The Mother of God, Mother of Seeds[34]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Christ God, Word of the Father, who were sown like rain in the virgin field of Mary, and like a perfect blade shot up from her womb without tiller, and became the food of the world which was in need of spiritual nourishment, grant that we may praise You with joy and exultation on the day of the remembrance of Your Divine Mother. And we will call her blessed who brought You forth, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 45 (44):2 & 11-18 My heart overflows with noble words...

Response

How can we magnify you, O Virgin, root plant of all faith?
You gave birth to God in the flesh
whom the Powers of Fire acclaim gloriously:
You are blessed, Lord, the Strong,
God of our fathers and Lord of the whole creation.

Who is able to speak fittingly
of the hidden mystery more exalted than any marvel?
He lowered His Exalted Being in His humility,
dwelt in the pure womb and endured the death of a slave.
You are blessed, Divine Mother, and we cry out to you:
You are truly worthy to be honoured with praises.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

We call on You, Lord God, with deep sighs: In Your compassion
answer us and forgive our offences in Your graciousness.

Make us worthy of Your Kingdom on the day of Your coming, that we may confess You and praise You with the companies of Your saints.

Glory to Christ who revealed Himself by His love
and came forth from Mary, the Pure and Holy Virgin,
and exalted her memory in heaven and on earth.
Come, all you peoples, bow down and worship Him.

Blessed are you, O Daughter of David, Mother of the Exalted One.
You are full of holiness and virtues which cannot be counted.
Yours is the purity of the virgins and the milk of the mothers.
Yours is the Fair Child whose name is Emmanuel.

O Blessed One, full of beauty, at all times
you are a high house of refuge, you are our impregnable stronghold.
By the power of your prayer may love be poured on us,
who celebrate the day of your remembrance.

Glory to the Father who is without beginning.
Adoration to the Son who saved us by His Cross.
Fervent thanksgivings to the Holy Spirit.
One God, to Him be praise, at all times.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Glorious Fruit which sprang from the virgin womb and came forth into the world to redeem and give life to the dead who had transgressed the commandment by eating, the Blessed Shoot which budded and came up from the thirsty earth of Mary and healed those who were sick on account of sin, the Sweet Manna which was placed in the Mystical Ark, Mary, and sweetened those who had grown bitter on account of sin. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

We praise You, Christ our God, who sent forth prophets and messengers to go before Your glorious coming, and to reveal by their mysteries and figures how You were to come forth in the flesh from a virgin, without change and without confusion. You were likened therefore to a natural cloud which cannot be laid hold of, so that as the clouds send showers on the thirsty fields without any partner, You the

Rain of Life descended from heaven to the earth and were carried by Mary like a cloud of flesh. Your birth was again signified by that rock of flint in the desert which brought forth a fountain of water without receiving moisture, and satisfied the thirst of the people, because You also are a water of life which was brought forth from the womb of her who is full of beauty and You quenched the thirst of the world. The oil also which once flowed from the rock is likened to you, Divine Anointing, which came forth from the purity of the Virgin by a supreme mystery, and You were a Holy Anointing to the Church redeemed by Your precious Cross. The honey again from the old hard rock which You gave to Your people for their food was a figure of Your sweetness which sweetened and made fragrant the bitterness of the gentiles. The ark of manna which was kept in the earthly tabernacle also signified to us Your wondrous conception from Mary, for in the likeness of the manna which came down from heaven, You descended from the height of Your Divinity and dwelt in the womb that You might be a heavenly food for the Holy Church when You are laid upon the altar. David also had a desire for the waters of Your Godhead when he prayed that his thirst might be quenched from the deep pool in Bethlehem. It was not the waters of springs or fountains that he sought but that Water which descends from on high. Indeed You are the Life-giving Water from Bethlehem which David saw, for it is You who quenched the thirst of the world and he desired You. Again the herb which the earth brought forth signified You who without seed came forth from the thirsty earth, the Virgin Mary.

Therefore we beg and beseech You, Good One and Lover of Humankind, on this day of the remembrance of Holy Mary who was found worthy to be Your Mother by grace, that You will grant by her prayers peace and tranquillity to Your people and Your Churches. Enlighten those who are misled regarding the word of Your doctrine and gather them together in the teaching of Your truth. And to those who take part in her memorial grant a share in the good things which do not pass away and in the joys which never fade. And with them we will offer praise to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Gabriel was sent by the Heavenly Father
to you , Mary, blessed and all good,
to announce that His Word would take flesh from your purity.

He became an infant in Your womb and appeared in the world from you
who brought forth the Life-giving Fruit as from a blessed field.

The Word of the Father lowered Himself and descended to you,
Pure and Holy Virgin, and became flesh without seed.
Like a blade full of life He grew up from you, Blessed Field.
Happy are you who became Mother of the Life-giving Lamb of God.
The Fruit of Life sprang from you as from a blessed field.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

On this day of Your remembrance, O Gracious One,
the heavens rejoice and exult,
and the earth leaps for joy and feels glorious
on account of the Fruit which is born from you.
He saved you from the thorn sown by the Evil One
and now sows in you the Seed of Life. What was barren becomes blessed.
Blessed is He who chose you to be His Mother.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Heaven and earth sing praise with the harp of David,
in remembrance of the Blessed Virgin Mother of God.
The power that bears the creation descends and rests in the pure womb.
He comes forth from it without breaking the seal of virginity.
He extols and magnifies her memory in the four quarters of the earth.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Pure Incense by which all the powers of heaven are delighted
and whose scent of life and breath of purity all things
however far breathe, receive from us sinners this fragrant incense
which we present before You for the honourable and holy remembrance
of Mary Your Blessed Mother.

Bestow on us all, the abundance of Your blessings
with the forgiveness of all faults and transgressions
which have been committed by us weak and sinful as we are.
By her prayers grant continual peace and unbroken tranquillity
that we may offer praise and thanksgiving
to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O Blessed One,
Blessed Field and Mother of God,
may your prayer always be with us.

Blessed Field, intercede for us,
and ask of Him, the Life-giving Fruit,
that He may be gracious to us and to the whole world.

O Mary, you are given to us like a sealed letter
in which are hidden the deep mysteries of the Son.
You provide your pure body, like a paper without flaw,
the Word Himself writes on it with His body.

Your Son is the Word and you are the letter,
by which forgiveness is sent to the whole world.
A letter already sealed before it is written
and the seals are preserved when you become the house of God.

You are written while remaining sealed.
You are read without the breaking of seals,
while the Father reveals in you exalted mysteries:
the Word rests within you while the seals are untouched,
conception in the flesh and a virgin body, O the great wonder!

Glory to the Father who chose Mary from all generations.
Adoration to the Son who came forth from her in holiness.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who made her His temple by resting on her.
By her prayers may God's mercy be upon us sinners.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Daughter of the King stands in glory,
like a queen at His right hand.

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Listen, O daughter, give ear to our words...
The King desires your beauty, your Lord.
We pay homage to Him.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Matthew	12: 46 - 50	The true happiness of the Mother of Jesus.
Luke	11: 27 - 28	

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us give attention and answer all together with joy and gladness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who did not leave the heart of the Father when the womb of the Virgin Mary received You, make us to know by experience the dignity of our calling, and complete in us the restoration of the divine likeness distorted by sin, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who revealed the mystery of the burning bush when the Holy Virgin bore the fire of Your Godhead, renew our whole being from within, even to the redemption of our body, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Christ our God, who during Your pilgrimage here on earth multiplied the loaves of bread to feed the hungry crowds, by the intercession of Your Mother, Mother of Life, help all the hungry of this world to obtain their daily food with dignity, and prompt those who live in affluence to share with the needy the good things of this earth, our common mother and source of our livelihood, we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord....P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you ...P.7

Response

As we have risen from sleep
to praise the name of Your Godhead, Lord of all,
heaven and earth praise You,
O Wakeful One hidden from the heavenly ones and the earthly ones.

Come you people of the light,
at night when darkness and silence envelop the world,
let us awake our spiritual harps,
and sing praise to God with the spiritual ones.

All generations shall call you blessed,
O Daughter of David, holy and full of grace.
From your womb has sprung forth hope for us;
life and salvation have come to us.

O Holy One, beseech your Only Son
on behalf of this assembly which celebrates Your festival,
that we may obtain mercy and forgiveness of offences,
and rejoice and offer praise with you in the Kingdom.

We offer praise to the Hidden Father,
adoration to the Son
and thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit.
Three persons, three names, one nature, one true God.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 24 (23) The Lord's is the earth and its fullness..

Response

Lift up your heads, you gates,
lift yourselves up, you everlasting doors,
that the King of Glory may enter,
the Lord Strong and Mighty.

On the day of the remembrance of the Blessed Virgin Mother,
the Wakeful Ones and the angels rejoice,
and the Churches sing praise to the Lord
who magnifies her feast in the four quarters of the earth.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to Him who was born beyond time and came to birth in time from the virgin womb.. the Bread of Life which sprang forth from Bethlehem of Judah without ploughing. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We worship You, Eternal Child, who were born of the Father without separation and again were pleased to be born of the Virgin Mother without pain. We praise You, the Invisible who were seen in the flesh. We exalt You the Intangible who made Yourself subject to bodily touch. We give glory to You, God who became man without any division. Who, Lord, can comprehend Your first birth from the Father without separation? And who can explain Your second birth of the Virgin without marriage, of which the one surpasses in wonder all the heavenly intelligences, and the other surpasses as a marvel every mind and word of earthly creatures? Who can grasp a conception without seed and without intercourse? Who can scrutinize a birth in which the seals of the mother's virginity were not broken in her childbearing?..... Let us come now to the praises of the Holy Virgin Mary Your Mother, and with great wonder we will cry out and say concerning her: O Virgin Earth which brought forth the new Adam from whose side the spiritual mother came forth for us which is baptism! O Blessed Daughter who brought forth for the Father the Lord and Saviour...

Therefore according to her word let us call her blessed, as is right

and say: Blessed are you from whom the Tree of Life grew up for us. Blessed are you, blessed among women from whom great blessings came to us.... Blessed are you within whom the Lamb that was to be slain for us was carried and from whom He was born for us. And while we delight in Him we offer praise and thanksgiving and adoration, to Him and to His father and to His Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

On this commemoration of Mary,
come, let us sing praise to Christ who came to save us.
Let us receive His gifts
and experience His graciousness and compassion.
Let us celebrate the day of her festival, halleluia
and she will intercede with her Son by her prayer
that He may show graciousness to us all.

O Mary you are a fountain of life for the believers,
you are the source of all blessings.
By the power of your prayer, may we be delivered from all harm
that we may become heirs to the Kingdom, halleluia.
Let your prayer be a stronghold for us, O Virgin Mother of God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

In heaven and on earth,
the day of your remembrance is honoured by angels and people.
They worship your only son.
Unceasingly , together they offer praise to Him, halleluia.
Glory to Him who honours and magnifies the glorious day of your feast.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Whosoever honours your remembrance,
O blessed one, is blessed by your prayers,
and the assembly that gathers to celebrate your feast,
obtains protection against all harm, halleluia.
Distress, afflictions and calamities will pass away from them.

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 87(86) On the holy mountain is His city....

Response

The Lord loves His holy city
more than all other dwelling places.
Its foundations are laid upon Mary
whom He has made His home here on earth.

Blessed is He who chose you from all generations,
O Pure Virgin, and became an infant in your womb,
and by His birth from you saves the nations.
Behold, they sing praise to Him on the day of your remembrance.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Glorious Fruit which sprang from the virgin womb and came forth into the world and redeemed and gave life to those who had transgressed the commandments; to the Blessed Shoot which grew up and rose from the thirsty earth of Mary and healed those who were sick because of sin. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil....

We praise You, O God Ineffable and Hidden from all, Inscrutable and having power over all, who dwelt in the Holy Virgin Mary without her knowing marriage, while You did not depart or cease from being God in person, and who honoured the memory of Your Mother full of beauty, and filled the hearts of the believers with spiritual jubilation that they might honour and praise her. We also with the praises of a new song will cry out and say: Blessed are you, pure Mother and Bride unwed, fountain of blessings, ship which carried joys, fleshly heaven in which the Sun of Righteousness descended and shining cloud which shed the rain of life on humankind, ineffable storehouse of grace, pure pearl without stain full of all the beauty of virtue, mountain of the spiritual Sinai in which the Divine Fire flamed, veil of Moses which was spread over the

face and gave light to the eyes of humankind, ark of the covenant in which are represented all allegories and figures, young dove in which the Eagle, the Ancient of Days, was enthroned, shining ladder by which our race was raised up to the Hidden Father, fair key by which the gates of Paradise were reopened.

Therefore while we celebrate her wondrous memory we ask that by her heavenly prayer she may enrich Your Churches with gifts and gather their people at Your right hand. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Rejoice, house of God, resplendent with light,
from you shines forth the glory of the Divinity.
Rejoice, full of grace, for the Lord who dwells in you
has greatly blessed you.

Rejoice, O land, for the Lord has done great things for you.
Mary, you are the land on which God has stepped,
the land on which the thorn of sin has never grown,
you who gave birth to Him who has torn up sin by the root.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Rejoice, paradise happier than the garden of Eden.
Rejoice, garden in which the Tree of Life has flourished
and where the fruits of all virtues have grown.
Blessed are you from whom the Tree of Life grew up for all.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed are you, Mary, land on which the Lord's blessing rests,
land bearing in your womb the Blessed Fruit of Life.
Without being sown it yields the Divine Fruit,
the Giver of life and Nourisher of all that exists.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P. 11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens... P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O Blessed One,
Blessed Field and Mother of God,
may your prayer always be with us.

Blessed Field, intercede for us
and ask of Him who is the Fruit of Life
that He may be gracious to us and to the whole world.

Mary, the joy your name gives is greater than any other joy.
From you, Christ the Immortal Joy has come into the world.
He who came to heal all manner of sickness,
is the healing of the sadness of the children of Adam.

Through you the Living Creatures put the flaming sword to rest
and ceased to guard the tree that took away the life of those who ate,
while you gave that Sweet Fruit full of life
of which those who eat find rest with God for ever.

Glory to the Father who chose Mary from all generations.
Adoration to the Son who came forth from her in holiness.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who made her His temple
while overshadowing her.
And on us graciousness, by her prayers. Amen. Amen.

By the prayer of her who carried You for nine months,
Son of God, remove from us all harm and evil.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P. 6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 17

Anthony the Great and the Desert Fathers[35]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp... P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord our God, that with true faith and sincere love we may honour and celebrate the day of the commemoration of Anthony the Great and all the Holy Fathers who for the sake of Your love renounced the world and adorned the Churches with their apostolic teachings and their noble way of life. May we walk in their footsteps and please You like them, and we will offer You praise and thanksgiving, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 19 (18) The heavens proclaim the glory of God...

Response

The Word of God is alive and active, it revives soul and spirit.
The testimony of the Lord is sure, it gives wisdom to the simple.
The teaching of the Lord is straight, it gladdens the heart.
The command of the Lord is pure, it enlightens the eyes.

As you became glorious by the beauty of your way of life,
O noble Anthony, you were clothed in God and became worthy
of the gift of the Holy Spirit to penetrate and reveal the mysteries,
and to teach the believers to cry out and say:
You are blessed for ever, O God of our Fathers.

Your sayings shine in the Churches like stars at dawn,
O teacher of truth, and the people who ponder over them

sing praise to the Good One who bestowed this gift on you.
You are blessed for ever, O God of our fathers.

Blessed is He who chose you
and kindled in you the love of His name,
to sow peace in His Churches and bring light to the world,
by the beauty of your way of life.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Blessed are you, holy fathers, hermits and monks,
who cast away all the deeds of darkness,
to put on the armour of the children of light,
Christ Jesus Himself the dispeller of all gloom.

Blessed are you, chosen father, Saint Anthony.
Your Lord saw your lofty asceticism,
while you were waging battle with the Adversary;
He was at your side and was pleased with your spiritual combat.

Blessed are you who were like a choice incense,
whose good odour delights God on high
and makes you dear to Him and to all men.
Behold, they magnify your memory in the four quarters of the earth.

Blessed are you who became a sweet fountain.
From you flow life-giving waters
and the Churches with their people
drink from them at all times.

Blessed are you, our father, whose crown is woven.
It is ready to be placed on your head,
on the day when the Son of the King will come,
in great glory with the angels.

Glory to the Father who chose you, Anthony the Great.
Adoration to the Son who adorned His Church with your way of life.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who through you uttered truths.
One God, to Him all praise.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Lord of lords who chose His chosen ones before the foundation of the world, and poured into their hearts the evangelical fire of His heavenly love, and enlightened them with His divine knowledge. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Christ our God, who with the wine of Your divine love quench the thirst of those who love You and make them drunk by Your grace with a divine drunkenness, and enrich them with Your lofty gifts, and adorn them with the strength which comes from You for the keeping of Your life-giving commandments... and make them stand before You as pillars of light to give light to all that is beneath the heaven, among the fathers and hermits and monks who were clothed with God, You gloriously brought to the heights of perfection our father Makarios, that sublime beauty of holiness and pillar of perfection which cannot be shaken, and our father John the Short who was raised to immeasurable greatness by his humility and attained to heavenly things by the simplicity of his mind, and our father Bishoi who was blessed with the vision of Your Godhead.. and Maximus and Domitius, the sons of the God-fearing kings, so royal and so glorious by the simplicity of their life and the purity of their prayer that they were soon called to see You face to face.. But above all we remember before You, him who was more exalted than them all, the blessed Anthony, head of all monks who was the first to tread the path of asceticism and became the model of all those who travel on the way of sublime perfection in caves or on the mountains or among the rocks. For he entered joyfully into the arena of the ascetic conflict to wage battle not with flesh and blood, but with the Evil One according to the saying of Your divine Apostle. And You, Lord, watched over him, aiding him and giving him the victory in the contest. You put to shame his enemy before him, and honoured him with the crown of glory.

Therefore we beg of You, Lord, and we beseech Your grace that You will be with us also and help us that we may be made like to Your saints in courage, and thus be worthy with them to see Your face, we and all the faithful departed, and to thank and praise You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Blessed are you Anthony who received God's word in your heart,
and pondered over it making it bear good fruits.
When the Gospel of the rich young man was read in the Church,
you were struck as if God Himself had spoken to you,
and after returning home, you distributed your riches among the poor.

Freed from all possessions you entered the path of asceticism,
in prayer and meditation, in fasting and manual labour,
and the lofty pursuit of self-realization,
by control of the senses, imagination and thoughts,
lest you would grow concerned about family and health.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

When eager disciples wanting to follow you,
broke in to the place of your solitary retreat for twenty years,
you came out like one initiated into divine mysteries,
filled with the Spirit of God and endowed with His gifts,
and you became the father of a multitude of monks.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Your monasteries were tabernacles of praise,
resounding with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
where all rejoiced in prayer and justice with love,
and worked with their hands to relieve the poor and the needy,
and they were a wonder to all the inhabitants of the country.

We make memory of our fathers who in their life-time
taught us to be children of God in this passing world.
Son of God, grant them rest in Your Kingdom,
with all the just and the righteous,
in that world which shall never pass away nor come to an end.

Prayer of Incense

Lord Jesus, You were pleased to call our fathers to follow You
in the monastic life and You strengthened them
in the spiritual combat which they sustained for You.

Receive now this service which we offer to You on the day
of the commemoration of Saint Anthony the Great and
all the Desert Fathers, true pillars of Your Holy Church,
that we may imitate them in the unseen warfare,
and become like them, while drawing ever closer to You
to recount all Your wonders simply by our way of life,
and praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O blessed fathers,
may your prayer always be with us
and help us to seek God in our whole life.

By your prayer, O blessed fathers,
may our Lord prompt us to walk in your footsteps,
seeking Him with all our heart, all our soul and all our strength.

Great is your glory, holy fathers who peopled the deserts
of Egypt and Lybia, of Palestine and Syria,
while the Emperor himself came to seek your guidance,
to establish the world on the foundation of the Gospel.

Like diligent farmers you ploughed the Lord's vineyard
and where thorns thrived you made to grow rich fruits.
Your vine gave a choice cluster, O glorious ones,
from it flowed a new wine that conquered the Evil One.

The beauty of your life made all people love you.
All who came to you were healed, comforted, enlightened.
Everyone saw in you men of God and friends of man.
They loved you like their father, their mother, their brother.

Glory to the Father who chose you from the beginning.
Adoration to the Son who exalted you even here on earth.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who crowned you with glory.
And on us, by your prayers, His graciousness. Amen. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The eyes of all creatures look to the Lord,
and He gives them food in due time.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
With an open and bountiful hand,
He grants the desires of all who live.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Matthew 19:16 - 21 The perfect discipleship of Christ.
6:31 - 34

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us give attention and answer all together with joy and gladness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who raised Anthony the Great and our fathers in the monastic life as living pillars of light and models of evangelical perfection, grant us always to renew our lives on the pattern of the luminous pages of Your Gospel, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who make streams of life-giving water to flow from the spiritual breasts of our fathers in the monastic life to quench the thirst of Your mystical flock, guide us always along the right paths and lead us beside streams of life, with joy and peace, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who prior to the proclamation of Your Gospel sowed in ancient cultures and religions seeds of Your word, prompt us to seek the seeds of contemplation and gather the fruits of monastic perfection of the spiritual heritage of this our country of India, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that the love of our brothers in the monastic life all over the world and especially in India and Asia may penetrate deep into our hearts, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that the monastic charism may be revealed as a great sign of the unity of all seekers of God, in spite of the divisions of religions, of orders and congregations, we beseech You.

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and for their services to the people, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Lord, to be imitators of their faith in a truly evangelical monastic life, and make us worthy of the lot which has fallen to them in everlasting light, by their prayers, Christ our true God, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P. 6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father...P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord...P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
make us also, earthly ones, keep vigil to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is Christ who gave you the charism of teaching,
and made the Churches to shine with the loftiness of your life.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is Christ who strengthened you for the spiritual combat
and gave you power to put the Enemy to shame.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one true God,
Supreme Abode for whom pure minds yearn,
Glorious Trinity, source and consummation of all things.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 1 Happy indeed is the man...

Response

Happy is the man whose delight is in the Lord.
He is like a tree planted beside a watercourse,
whose leaves never fade, and gives fruit in due season.
The Lord Himself watches over his ways.

Blessed is He who magnifies your remembrance, O holy fathers,
and from one end of the earth to the other
makes glorious the day of your commemoration.
O God, be gracious to all.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Lord who gives to His beloved the sleep of rest until the day of the resurrection and prepares for those who love as He loved us, a good inheritance in the abode of light. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ our God, Firstborn of the Heavenly Father, when You became man like us You laid down for us the way of virtuous life. You gave us evangelical counsels to raise us to the perfection revealed in Your Gospel when You said: He who wishes to be perfect, let him sell his possessions and give to the poor and he shall have a treasure in heaven, and let him come after Me. When the blessed Anthony whose feast we celebrate today, heard this, his heart was set on fire with holy love and he determined to follow You. He distributed all his possessions to the poor and turning his face from family and people and all earthly things, he bent his neck beneath Your gentle yoke. He betook himself to the holy way of the monastic life, meditating on the divine scriptures day and night and labouring in watching and prayer, with forbearance in all tribulations... He praised You continually in sweet songs, dying to himself and living for You alone. We therefore exalt him while we say: Blessed are you, Anthony, father of hermits and head of all monks... who are a mirror of perfection to all who love the monastic life, by whose light the ascetics were instructed and the hermits were enlightened. Blessed are you who

walked in the steps of Christ while you bore the yoke of the Cross from the beginning to the end of a very long life.

Therefore we beseech you, O excellent and noble father Anthony, intercede for us with Christ our Lord who took delight in your way of life that He may also be pleased with our poor services. By your prayers help us to fight against the enemies and destroyers of the spiritual life: Satan, the flesh and the world, that like you we may die to its pleasures while bearing the fruits of the Spirit which are the signs of the coming of God's Kingdom. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Anthony gave no thought to the passing of time.
Day by day as though he were a beginner in the ascetic life,
he made greater effort towards perfection.
Daily he repeated to himself: Forget what is behind,
and press forward to reach out to that which lies ahead.

This was too much for the enemy to bear, who feared
that Anthony would fill the desert with asceticism.
Calling other demons they lashed on him so gruesomely,
that Anthony lay on the ground speechless from pain.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Lord was not forgetful of His disciple's struggle.
As Anthony looked up from the ground he could see
the roof opening and a beam of light coming down to him.
Suddenly all the demons were gone,
and all at once the pains in his body ceased.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Perceiving that help had come from Jesus, he asked Him:
Why did You not appear at the beginning?
I was there, Anthony, He said, but I watched you in action.
Because you held out, I will always be your helper.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 43(42) Defend me, O God, and plead my cause...

Response

O send forth Your light and Your truth to guide us.
Lead us to Your holy mountain, the place where You dwell.
When shall we come to You, O God of our joy,
and praise You on the harp, O God of our delight?

Blessed are you, holy father, your mouths were like harps.
The Holy Spirit sang sweet songs through your lips
which delighted all the Churches of Christ.
On account of this they honour your memory.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is glorified by His saints, our fathers in the monastic life, and who set them before us as patterns of that perfection to which all people of God are called. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We give thanks to You, our Lord Jesus Christ, who visit us and bring us great joy in the commemoration of our fathers whose teachings and examples are wonderful illustrations of Your deeds and of Your words to us. By them our hearts weighed down by weariness and trials are comforted, our lives are seen in a new light, as humility increases and faith is strengthened.

Therefore we beseech You that You may always prompt us to drink deep from these wellsprings of the monastic charism. Give us above all that hope of the things to come so earnest in the lives of our fathers. Make us to walk always in the fulfilment of Your will. Grant us to be all one in thought and feeling, and filled with brotherly affection, kindly and humble-minded, avoiding all negligence in the remembrance that You expect from us the fruits of the Spirit among which stand out goodness,

patience and gentleness. Give us an ever greater zeal for the works of the Spirit, that while labouring for the needs of the body we may become temples of the Holy Spirit, and none of us be deprived of that joyful expectation of Your Kingdom, or found unfaithful to his free commitment to You in this holy community, holy on account of our fellowship with You, Jesus and with Your Father and with Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

As Anthony was teaching, all his disciples were rejoicing.
While in some the love of virtue increased,
in others negligence was discarded and conceit was checked.
All admired in him the charism of discernment of the spirits.

Their huts on the mountains were like dwellings of divine choirs,
resounding with psalms and prayers,
and they were working also to give alms.
Preserving love and concord among themselves and with all people,
all of them rejoiced in the hope of the things to come.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

It was like seeing a land apart, a land of piety and justice.
There was neither wrongdoer, nor sufferer of wrongs,
but a multitude of ascetics, studying and fasting,
all with one set purpose, the perfection of love.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Those who came to visit them were comforted,
and seeing these huts and the monks' earnestness,
they would say: How fair is your dwelling,
like the garden in Eden with every kind of tree,
the tree of life and the tree of knowledge.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the Glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord...P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O blessed fathers,
may your prayer always be with us
and help us to seek God in our whole life.

By your prayers, O blessed fathers,
may our Lord prompt us to walk in your footsteps,
seeking Him with all our heart, all our soul and all our strength.

Happy are you, fountains of sweet waters,
holy fathers, from whom flow life-giving springs,
which at all times quench the thirst of your disciples,
and rejoice the Churches and their people.

Noble athletes who completed the race,
chaste in body, free from all stains and passions,
with minds sober and hearts full of love,
pure and exalted in your life of lofty asceticism.

Harps of the Spirit calling men to conversion,
flutes echoing the hymns of sweet doctrine,
lamps driving away all darkness from our minds
and fountains from which flow secret streams.

Friends of God, temples of the Spirit, brothers to all people,
your crown is radiant, and sweet is the fragrance of your life.
Your feast is glorious, bountiful the praise offered to you.
Your bliss is full of light. Blessed is He who chose you.

Glory to the Father who chose you from the beginning.
Adoration to the Son who exalted you even here on earth.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who crowned you with glory.
And on us, by your prayers, His graciousness. Amen. Amen.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 26

The Abbots Robert, Alberic and Stephen The Three Founders of Citeaux [36]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father ...P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord God, that with true faith and sincere love we may honour and celebrate the day of the remembrance of the great among our fathers, the glorious abbots, Robert, Alberic and Stephen, the three founders of Citeaux. They renounced the world and adorned the Holy Church with a renewed monastic charism of preference for the cenobitic life, in conformity with Saint Benedict's Rule for Monasteries, and much love of the brothers and of the place. May we walk in their footsteps and grow into a holy habitation of God and people, offering Him praise and thanksgiving, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 19 (18) The heavens proclaim the glory of God...

Response

The Word of God is alive and active, it revives soul and spirit.
The decrees of the Lord are clear, they give wisdom to the simple.
The commands of the Lord are right, they enlighten the minds.
The Lord's teachings reveal His love, they gladden our hearts.

As you became glorious by the beauty of your way of life,
O noble fathers, clothed in God and worthy of the gifts
of the Holy Spirit, to restore a true monastic way of life,
you taught your disciples to cry out, and say:
You are blessed for ever, O God of our fathers.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

By the shining light of their lives, O Lord,
dispel all darkness when it comes on us
that, with enlightened understanding,
we may serve You in wholly new earnestness.

They heard Your call to radical discipleship.
They experienced the spiritual energies of the life to come.
Grant us also to know from experience the new life in You,
when the heart is filled with the joy that surpasses all joys.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord... Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to Christ our God, the True Shepherd caring for His flock redeemed by His precious blood, who raises continually for the support of His Churches zealous disciples. By their faith in Him our three holy fathers endured hardships, by their hope in Him they practised asceticism, and by their love of Him and of each other they were made glorious. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

We praise you, venerable founder fathers of the New Monastery, later called Citeaux, after the name of a wild shrub that grew in the marshy tract of wood offered to you for a foundation, and where you first erected shelters of boughs and branches as your dwelling place.

We exalt you, Robert, venerable leader whose whole life-- from the tender age of fifteen when you joined a Benedictine Monastery, was to avoid and to do away with the mitigations that reigned in many monastic communities of your time, in order to lead a life of austerity and sacrifice. It is true that you were called back to your former monastery and that you spent barely half a year at Citeaux, yet we dare say that without you there would have been no Cistercian Order. For many years, you have been the initiator and the animator of its foundation. It is you who attracted the fervent souls who first with you, and later by themselves were to be at the heart of the great reform. It is from you that the original inspiration sprang and under your leadership that the foundation took place.

We revere you, Alberic, former prior of the community, elected abbot by your companions to be their leader. Though you lived only a few more years, you consolidated the infant foundation, in which you were known as an early and close companion of Abbot Robert, and as a man of great learning, well versed in both the divine and human sciences, a lover of the brothers and of the place. Moving forward from the original aspirations, you established usages in conformity with them. You decided to suppress all clothing and food not recognized by the Rule and to do away, even in the liturgy, with everything contrary to the will of the Holy Legislator. In spite of having first to secure the canonical recognition of the foundation, primacy of the spiritual life shaped by the spirit of evangelical poverty was always maintained. And such vigilance was to remain a tradition of the Cistercian Order. Your successors would praise you for your solicitude and industry which, with God's assistance, advanced in its holy way of life while shining in popular esteem, and also growing in necessary resources.

We glorify you, Stephen, endowed with the energy and charity needed to put the ideals of your predecessors into practice in the foundation of one of the great Orders of the Western monastic tradition. Even during your priorate under Abbot Alberic as well as later, you showed your great concern to do away with all luxurious decorations in the church and indiscriminate accretions to the daily and festive liturgy. It was the same burning zeal for solidity in spiritual things which expressed itself in your codification of the monastic usages of daily life, the first Customary of the New Monastery. But a greater achievement still, one which would last to this day, was a constitution of admirable discretion which ensured the union of the innumerable foundations all over the world, the Charter of Charity, kept active through the annual General Chapter of abbots, to preserve that peace, harmony and concord which are essential to a monastic Order. Further it was you also who obtained from the pope, for all abbots of the Order, exemption from attending ecclesiastical councils and synods that you might more freely attend to the divine services and give yourself more sincerely to contemplation with a pure heart.

Therefore we beseech You, Lord, who chose our beloved founders and sanctified them and strengthened them and ennobled them, that you will ennoble us also, who celebrate their festive remembrance, with all goodness, that we may grow into a true *koinonia*, the communion by which You live in us and among us, with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

We beg You, send into our broken world prophets and apostles who will create and multiply all over the inhabited planet base communities of people committed to true sharing and to upholding dignity of life and true freedom for all. Prompt us also to labour like them for the cause of righteousness by working with You for the removal of evil in us and around us, that Your Holy Name may be praised by them, on account of the spiritual patrimony they left us, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Like skilled merchants in search of fine pearls who sell everything
they have, in order to buy the precious pearl of unsuspected value,
the three founders, when involved in the monastic movement,
put their whole heart in the pursuit of heavenly studies
rather than allowing themselves to get entangled in earthly affairs.

Robert, Alberic and Stephen, you were highly talented
and rightly venerated for your holiness. It was on account of you
that the monastic movement gifted with such dedicated leaders
was able to transform itself into a vital force for good,
both for the Church and for the world at large.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Through trials and blessings, you unwearingly exhorted
your companions always to be active in advancement in virtue,
strengthening the good reputation that had flowed all the way
to your surroundings. Thus going from good to better
you firmly rooted the Order in a remarkable monastic tradition.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Citeaux was a place chosen to live a true monastic life,
a school of the Lord's service but also of love,
a life of dedicated chastity, humility and austerity,
a life zealously and lovingly embracing poverty, in imitation
of the poor Christ, great lover of the poor, and in union with Him.

We make memory of our fathers who in their lifetime,
taught us to be children of God in this passing world.

Son of God, grant them, and all those who followed You in Your Passover to take their delight in Your Kingdom with the just and the righteous in that world which shall not pass away and never be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Lord of lords, may the fragrance of this incense
which we burn before You at this evening service,
in commemoration of Your servants Robert, Alberic and Stephen,
the three founder fathers of the Cistercian Order,
be pleasing to Your Lordship and give delight to Your Godhead
with our praises and thanksgivings.

And may our prayers and thanksgivings be joined with their prayers,
that they may find their way to You and be acceptable in Your sight,
as we celebrate their feast by singing praise to You
with tranquillity and peace, with love, sweetness and joy,
offering them to You and to Your Father and to the Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, our founder fathers.
May the Lord hear your prayer and be gracious to all.

By your prayer may the Lord dispel the darkness of evil,
from all of us who take refuge in you with faith.

Blessed are you Robert, Alberic and Stephen, founders of Citeaux,
for your Lord saw your way of life all transparent and radiating,
and He was well pleased with you and blessed your ministry.
May your prayer be a protection for us and for the whole creation.

Blessed are you who were like a fragrant incense in this world.
Its sweet aroma ascended to God Most High and gave Him delight.
On account of this, today your memory is honoured and magnified
in the four quarters of the earth.

Blessed are you who set your whole heart on your Lord,
and became life-giving springs. Streams of life-giving water
flow from you, and the Churches and their children
still today drink from them and quench their thirst.

Blessed are you holy fathers, Robert, Alberic and Stephen,
for your crown is woven. It is waiting for you
to be placed on your heads on the day when the Son of the King
comes with great glory with His angels.

Glory to the Father who chose you, founder fathers of Citeaux.
Thanksgiving to the Son who made you the ornament of His Church.
Adoration to the Spirit who through you and your disciples, made
the monastic charism to shine in the Churches and in the whole world.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The just flourish like the palm tree,
as the cedars of Lebanon extending their branches.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Planted in the house of the Lord,
they grow vigorously in the house of God.
As the vine laden with fruits,
they proclaim the glory of the Lord.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 15:1-11 It is My Father's will that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us give heed to the intercessions and answer all together with joy and reverence to God: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole creation.

Christ our God, who raised up Your servants Robert, Alberic and Stephen as breathing pillars and beacons of light in the medieval Church of Europe and their radiance spread all over the world, make to shine now in this country of India - the cradle of monastic living - the Christian monastic charism as the manifestation of a divine quest, a true pattern of Gospel life, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole creation.

Christ our God, who through Your servants Robert, Alberic and Stephen revealed the monastic life as a meeting place of God and men, bearing fruit in the holy *koinonia*, a community of goods with union of hearts, make to spread basic communities to rebuild into one body with one heart, churches painfully divided and a world sorely broken, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole creation.

Christ our God, we pray that in a world faced with unprecedented opportunities, but also dangers of annihilation on account of technological advances breeding consumerism and the deterioration of spiritual values, monastic communities may contribute to uphold patterns of simple living, with unconditional sharing, and respect for all that lives and for the whole creation, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole creation.

Christ our God, we pray that the communion and unanimity so earnestly advocated by our founder fathers may be earnestly animated in our days, and prompt our Churches to preserve or regain their freedom from oppressive social and economic structures, and to make their presence felt among the poor and the downtrodden, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole creation.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Lord, to be imitators of their sincere faith and evangelical way of life, that the Churches may reveal themselves as communities of love, working with You in this world to put an end to shameful poverty and degradation, by a true sharing of all the good things of this world, and by upholding the right and dignity of all that lives, and the sacredness of the whole creation, and we will cry three times:

Lord have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...p.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... p.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord...P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
make us also, earthly ones, worthy to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is Christ, who bestowed on you the monastic charism
and made the Churches to shine with the loftiness of your life.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is Christ, who strengthened you to pursue unwearingly
a genuine renewal of the monastic life in Your time.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three
and the three are one:
the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God.
To Him be praise, and on us His graciousness, for ever.

FIRST WATCH

FOR THE MOTHER OF GOD QUEEN OF CITEAUX

Psalm 45 (44): 2; 11-18 My heart overflows with noble words...

Response

Listen, O daughter, in place of your father, sons shall be yours.
You will make them princes over all the earth.
May this song make your name for ever remembered.
May the people praise you from age to age.

Mary, our holy mother and our queen,
virgin and holy in yourself, and motherly in your heart,
you are a great marvel, who for nine months
carried the Heavenly Fire in your womb.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to the Word of the Eternal Father who lowered Himself to dwell in the womb of the Virgin and was clothed in flesh from her and came forth from her womb. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We salute you, Mary, Mother of God, light never extinguished, Mother and Virgin. It is through you that He comes. He who according to the holy Gospel comes in the name of the Lord. It is through you that the Trinity is blessed, that the Cross is worshipped throughout the world. Through you the Enemy is defeated and the fallen head of the creation is re-elevated to heaven, and all creation returns to the knowledge of the truth. Through you all the believers obtain baptism and the oil of joy. Through you Churches are founded in all the world, people obtain conversion because through you the Uniquely Beloved Son of God illumines with His light those who are in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Therefore we beg of you, O Mother of Graciousness, that you will intercede with your Son and your God and obtain for us that repentance which crucifies sin, and compunction which brings blessedness, that like our fathers Robert, Alberic and Stephen, we may experience the bliss of the beatitudes. Through chastity and poverty, sobriety and watchfulness, may we, his disciples, radiate in this homeland of asceticism and contemplation the spiritual beauty of the Gospel, that through unceasing prayer and humble service we may attain the heights of divine charity, to be in truth, like your Son Jesus, sons of the Father and brothers to all people, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Come, all you who have discernment, let us marvel
at the Virgin Mother, David's daughter,
herself most fair, who gave birth to the Wonderful.
She is the spring that provides the Fountain,
the ship that brings joy from the Father,
who carries good news in her pure womb.
She took on board and escorts
the great Steersman of creation
through whom peace reigns on earth and in heaven.

Come, let us wonder at the Virgin most pure,
wondrous in herself, unique in creation,
she gave birth yet knew no man.
Her pure soul was filled with wonder,
daily her mind gave praise
in joy at the twofold wonder:
her virginity preserved and her child most dear.
Blessed is He who shone forth from her.

A young dove, she carried the Eagle, the Ancient of days,
singing praise as she carried Him, in her lovely songs:
O my Son most rich, in a tiny nest
You have chosen to grow. Melodius Harp,
You are silent like a child, please let me sing to You
with the lyre whose chords stir the Winged Creatures.
Pray, let me speak to You.

Your home, my Son, is higher than all,
yet it was Your wish to make me Your home.
Heaven is too small to contain Your splendour,
yet I, poorest of creatures, am carrying You.
Let Ezekiel come and see You on my knees;
let him kneel down and adore You, and acknowledge
it was You he saw there lifted by the Winged Creatures
above the chariot, and let him call me blessed who carry You now.

The very chariot stops amazed that I carry its Master.
The Winged Creatures cry out with trembling:
Blessed is Your Splendour from Your place,
that place is with me, my bosom is Your home!
Your Radiance rests on my knees,
the Throne of Your Majesty is held in my arms.
Instead of the chariot wheels, my fingers clasp You.
I too will cry out: Blessed are You from Your place.

Isaiah the prophet proclaimed:
A virgin shall conceive and give birth.
Come, Isaiah, and look on me; let us rejoice together,
for I have given birth, with my virginity still sealed.
O prophet of the Spirit, rich in your visions,
look upon Emmanuel who was hidden from your eyes.
Raise your voice to confirm that I gave birth
in my virginity, as you yourself foretold.

Come, all you who have discernment,
vocal advocates of the Spirit, prophets
who beheld hidden things in your true visions.
You farmers who sowed seed, and slept in hope,
rise up and rejoice at the harvest: look in my arms
I clasp the Wheat-sheaf of life
that provides bread for the hungry, that feeds the needy.
Rejoice with me, for I carry the sheaf full of joys.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 47(46) All you peoples, clap your hands...

Response

God has gone up amidst shouts of joy;
the Lord has gone up with trumpet blast.
Sing praise for the Lord, sing praise,
sing praise to our King, sing praise.

Let us praise Him in honour of our founder fathers,
Robert, Alberic and Stephen, three stars shining with God,
who brightened the Church of their time
and still draw earnest disciples in our own generation.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise.... to the Lord of lords who chose His saints before the foundation of the world and poured into their hearts the fire of His love. He enlightened them with the wisdom that passes all understanding. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Christ our God, who with the wine of Your divine love, quench the thirst of those who love You, and by Your Spirit make them drunk with a divine drunkenness, and enrich them with Your lofty gifts, and make them stand before You as pillars of light to give light to a world sunken in darkness, You gloriously brought our Cistercian fathers to the heights of sanctity. We give thanks to You because today You give us great joy with their commemoration. Their teachings and their example are truly remarkable illustrations of Your own words and deeds. By them, when our hearts are weighed down by failures, trials and weariness, we are comforted, we see our lives in a new light, the light of Your Gospel, and our faith is renewed and strengthened.

Therefore, we beg and beseech You, that You may always prompt us to drink deep from the fountain of their monastic charism. Grant

us to be all one in thought and feeling, filled with brotherly affection, gentle and humble-minded in fidelity to our commitment to a true monastic life, avoiding carelessness and doing away with customary negligences, so that none of their disciples may be deprived of that joyful expectation of Your Kingdom, or found unfaithful to his dedication to You, in this holy community, holy on account of our fellowship with You, Jesus, our Shepherd and Saviour, and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Community was important for our three founders.
When Robert was called to be the guide of the hermits of Colan,
he gradually transformed their colony into a community.
Alberic was remembered as a lover of the brothers, and Stephen
involved them in all the steps he took to establish the Order.

The school of the Lord's service was to become a school of love.
They remembered Benedict's ultimate commendation of the good zeal:
Let the brothers practise this zeal with most fervent love.
They should outdo one another in showing reverence, and most patiently
endure one another's infirmities whether of body or character.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

No one should follow what he judges good for himself,
but rather what is good for his brother. Let them practise
fraternal charity with chaste love, offering to God loving reverence,
to their abbot sincere and humble affection; while preferring nothing
to Christ who will bring them all together to everlasting life.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Their disciples were to build on these a true life of contemplation,
offered as the fruit of quiet, quiet of the cloister in detachment
from worldly concerns, quiet of the mind through control
of the passions, the inward and outward senses, leading to peace
and quiet of contemplation, inner stillness in oneness with the Lord.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia... P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplications Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O illustrious fathers.
May the Lord always hear your prayer
and through the Holy Spirit pour His love into our hearts.

By your prayer, revered abbots, Robert, Alberic and Stephen,
through the intercession of Mary the Queen of Citeaux,
may streams of life-giving waters pour out from our hearts.

You did not set your hearts on growing rich. You strove rather
for simplicity and poverty, yearning to be poor with the poor Christ,
living wholly upright and godly lives,
by keeping the straight path of the Rule for cenobites,
the strongest kind of monks as abbot Benedict testified.

When Christ the Saviour of all appeared, the holy apostles
and evangelists led a common life, and when He ascended
to His Father and sent on them His Holy Spirit, all who believed
lived together having all things in common,
and goods were distributed to all as any had need.

Day by day they attended the prayers in the temple
and broke the bread in their homes, partaking of food
with glad and generous hearts, praising God.
They were one heart and soul and no one said that the things which
he possessed was his own, and none of them was ever in want.

The common life flowed out from the Fount of life itself,
the Fount of which it is written: In you is the fount of life
and in Your light we see the light. The common life
is thus the radiance from the Eternal Light,
a flow of life-giving waters from the Everlasting Fountain.

Glory to Him who is one in three
and the three are one:
the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God.
To Him be praise, and on us His graciousness, for ever.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God.... P.6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 28

Ephrem the Syrian
Deacon of Nisibis and Doctor[37]
Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp ...P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father ...P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord our God, that with true faith and sincere love we may celebrate the day of the memory of the great among the fathers, Ephrem the Syrian, who for the sake of Your love renounced the world and adorned the Churches with his apostolic teaching and his noble way of life. May we walk in his footsteps and please You, like him, glorious and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 19 (18) The heavens proclaim the glory of God...

Response

The Word of God is alive and active, it revives soul and spirit.
The testimony of the Lord is sure, it gives wisdom to the simple.
The teaching of the Lord is straight, it gladdens the heart.
The command of the Lord is pure, it enlightens the eyes.

O doctor of illustrious beauty, Ephrem, monk deacon of Nisibis,
you were clothed with God by the gift of the Holy Spirit,
who unveiled for you the mysteries of the Holy Scriptures,
and made to flow from your heart streams of life-giving water.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Blessed are you, our father Saint Ephrem, the chosen one,
your Lord saw your beautiful manner of life
and He was pleased with you and with your service.
May your prayer be a stronghold to us.

Blessed are you who were like a choice incense
whose fragrance delights the Most High.
On account of this He glorifies your remembrance
and magnifies it in the four quarters of the earth.

Blessed are you who have become a sweet fountain.
From you flow life-giving waters,
and the Churches with all their people
drink from them unceasingly.

Blessed are you, our father! Behold, your crown is woven
and it is waiting for you. It will be put on your head
on the day when the Son of the King will come in His great glory
and all the angels with Him.

Glory to the Father who chose you, noble Ephrem.
Adoration to the Son who adorned His Church with your way of life.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who through you uttered truths.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to Him who bestows heavenly gifts on earthly beings and made His servant Ephrem illustrious in beauty because he believed in Him and kept His commandments. He filled him with the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit and made to flow from his spiritual breasts divine teachings full of the joy of life. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Christ our God, who took delight in the noble Ephrem, enlighten us to offer a praise such as is fitting to the glory You bestowed on him, the pride of the doctors, model of deacons

and ornament of hermits and monks. A faithful trader, he made his talent increase and did not allow himself to be robbed by sin, the great thief. Fountain from which flow hymns whose delightful chant awakens the whole earth. Divine sage, who began by practising and then taught his disciples the precepts of salvation, versed in all knowledge, speaking with simplicity to help the simple, being at once serpent and dove. He gave rhythm to all his prose, putting his teaching in verse, and it spread throughout the world. He made women descend into the arena of doctrinal disputation and with the help of the youth won the victory against erroneous doctrines. His sacred songs are like waves of the sea and none among the wise of the world has been able to sound their depth and their extent. He is the crown of the Syrian Churches who keep in store for us spiritual riches. From him we learn how to praise You, our Lord, in delightful hymns.

Therefore we ask You, Christ our God, by the intercession of Ephrem, Your elect, accept this service which we present with great joy as a delightful perfume to Your will. Fill us with Your love that we may always do the works which are pleasing to You. Form in us the image of Your likeness, as You did for Your servant Ephrem. Make the light of Your knowledge rise over us and infuse in us the transforming power of Your own life. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

The Church of believers rejoices, exults and sings praises to Him
who chose you from the beginning, our father, Noble Ephrem,
who placed you in her as a lamp to radiate the light of the Holy Spirit.
She is enlightened by you and rejoices in you, and now she honours
the day of your commemoration with songs of the Holy Spirit.

With wonder and love we recall the great story of your life,
your relentless progress on the path of the monastic quest.
How you served at Nisibis under three great fathers.
How Jacob's strictness stood well with your youth,
and Babu's firmness fitted you, as you advanced in age,
while the gentleness of Walagesh brightened your later years.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

In the cave, on a rocky mountain overlooking Edessa,
your dwelling was in solitude, your garment of coarse cloth,
your diet sober and of frugal food.
Your meditation of the Sacred Scriptures was uninterrupted.
Prompted by the Holy Spirit your prayer was unceasing,
and your heart, filled with joy, would sing divine melodies.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Blessed are you humble monk deacon of the Churches of Asia,
harp of the Holy Spirit, father of monks and hermits.
The Lord Himself, you said, wished to remove from solitaries
all cause of dejection and sadness when He said:
Where one will be alone, there also I shall be.
Truly Christ is with us and He is our joy.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

Lord of lords, may the good odour of this incense
which we burn before You on this day,
in commemoration of Your servant Saint Ephrem,
be pleasing to Your Lordship and give delight to your Godhead,
with our praises and thanksgivings.

And may our praises and thanksgivings be joined with his prayers,
that they may find their way to You and be acceptable in Your sight,
and we will celebrate You, singing praise to You
with tranquillity and peace, with love, delight and gladness.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O Noble Ephrem,
may your prayer always be with us.
May the Lord hear your prayer and be gracious to all.

By your prayers, O Noble Ephrem,
may the Lord remove all harm and evil,
from those who take refuge in you with faith.

What tongue is able to speak of your spiritual beauty?
Your life, like your hymns, is shining like the sun.
The Churches and the creation are illumined by them.
They make known Him who is the Light of the world.

A lover of contemplation and of unceasing prayer,
you descended in the arena of doctrinal confrontation.
By leading women and the youth in singing spiritual hymns,
you made truth prevail and restored peace to the Churches.

Again at the end of your course here on earth,
when famine was engulfing the city of Edessa,
seeing the people's plight you took in your own hands
the alleviation of suffering by active works of charity.

Glory to the Father who chose you from the beginning.
Adoration to the Son who magnifies your remembrance.
Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit who crowns you with glory.
And on us, by your prayers, God's love and graciousness.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Ephrem believed in the Lord and drank deep.
Streams of life-giving water followed from his heart
streams of water that gladdened the city of God
and quenched the thirst of His people.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 7:37-39[A] The spring of life-giving waters.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us pay attention and answer all together with joy and gladness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who raised Ephrem the Deacon as a pillar of light and a model of evangelical perfection, grant to Your Churches to be renewed unceasingly on the pattern of the luminous pages of the Gospel, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who made streams of life-giving water to flow from the spiritual breasts of our father Saint Ephrem to quench the thirst of Your mystical flock, guide us always along the right path besides streams of life, with joy and peace, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who prior to the proclamation of the gospel sowed seeds of Your word in ancient cultures and religions, prompt us to seek the seeds of contemplation in the spiritual heritage of this our country of India and to gather from it fruits for our monastic quest, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that the monastic charism may be revealed as a great sign of the unity of all seekers of God in spite of the divisions prevailing among the great religions, orders and congregations, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N...Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that the love of our brothers in the monastic life all over the world and especially in India and Asia may be deeply rooted in our hearts, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and for their services to the people, for the strengthening of universal brotherhood among all people, beyond distinctions of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened in this our country of India and in the whole creation, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant us, Christ our God, through the works and trials of this life to hasten to our Father's house, and as Moses from the mountain top could see the Promised Land, make us to anticipate it even now in service and contemplation, like Your servant Ephrem, and we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father.... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
awaken us also, earthly ones, to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is Christ who endowed you with the charism of teaching,
and made the Church to shine with the loftiness of your way of life.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is the Holy Spirit who unveiled for you
the deep mysteries hidden in the Sacred Scriptures.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three, and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God,
Supreme Abode whom pure minds yearn for,
Glorious Trinity, Source and Consummation of all things.

FIRST WATCH
FOR THE MOTHER OF GOD

Psalm 1 Happy indeed is the man...

Response

Happy is the man whose delight is in the Lord.
He is like a tree planted beside a watercourse,
its leaves never fade and it gives fruit in due season.
The Lord Himself watches over his ways.

Blessed Ephrem, Harp of the Holy Spirit,
you are a tree planted beside the river of the water of life,
which bears fruit unceasingly, every month of the year,
and its leaves are for the healing of the nations.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise... to the Word of the Eternal Father who lowered Himself to dwell in the womb of the Virgin and was clothed in flesh from her and came forth from her womb. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

We salute you, Mary, Mother of God, light never extinguished, Mother and Virgin. It is through you that He comes, He who in the Holy Gospel comes in the name of the Lord. It is through you that the Trinity is blessed, that the Cross is worshipped throughout the world. Through You the Enemy is defeated and the fallen head of the creation is re-elevated to heaven, and all the creation returns to the knowledge of the truth. Through you all the believers obtain baptism and the oil of joy. Through you Churches are founded in all the world, peoples obtain conversion, because through you that Unique Son of God illumines with His light those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Therefore we beg of you, O Mother of Graciousness, that you will intercede with your Son and your God and obtain for us that repentance which crucifies sin, and compunction which brings blessedness, that like our father Saint Ephrem we may experience

the bliss of the beatitudes. Through chastity and poverty, sobriety and wakefulness may his disciples radiate in this homeland of asceticism, and contemplation, the spiritual beauty of the Gospel, that through unceasing prayer and humble service they may attain the heights of divine charity, to be in truth like Your Son Jesus, sons of the Father and brothers to all people, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn of Saint Ephrem

No one quite knows, Lord, what to call Your mother:
should we call her virgin?
But her giving birth is an established fact.
Or married woman? But no man has known her.
If Your mother's case is beyond comprehension,
who can hope to understand Yours?

She alone is Your mother,
but she is Your sister, with everyone else.
She was Your mother, she was Your sister,
she was Your bride, too, along with all chaste souls.
You, who are the reflection of Your mother's beauty
Yourself adorned her with everything!

By her virgin nature, she was Your bride already
before You came. And when You came
she conceived in a manner quite beyond nature.
O Holy One, she remained a virgin,
when she gave birth to You in a most holy fashion.

With You Mary underwent all that married women undergo:
conception, but without intercourse;
her breasts filled with milk but against nature's pattern;
You made her, the thirsty earth,
all of a sudden into a fountain of milk!

The Mighty One entered, and put on insecurity from her womb;
the Provisioner of all entered, and experienced hunger;
He who gives drink to all entered, and experienced thirst.
Naked and stripped there came forth from her, He who clothes all.

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 43 (42) Defend me, O God, and plead my cause...

Response

O Lord, send Your light and Your truth to guide us,
lead us to Your holy mountain the place where You dwell.
There shall we come to You, the God of our joy,
and praise You on our harp, You the God of our delight.

Happy are you, Ephrem, great doctor of truth,
who confessed that you were born in the way of truth,
and truth was with you in your youth,
and fidelity to truth in your old age.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Eternal Word of the Father who gives wisdom to the renowned fathers, and by whose grace they teach us the truth. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Who could grasp all the riches of one single word of God? Whatever we can comprehend is far less than what remains hidden. O Lord, You give to Your words multiple colours of great beauty that they who study them may dwell on what nourishes their contemplation, like that rock which was struck in the desert and became for each one a spiritual drink: They all drank the same spiritual drink. Let us therefore rejoice when we are nourished by the word and not feel sad because we cannot exhaust all the riches it contains. That which we understand is our share now, but what remains is also our inheritance, we will obtain it later. Meanwhile let this prompt us to perseverence in the unceasing meditation of the Word of God.

We ask You therefore, O Lord, that Your word be always for us, as it was for Saint Ephrem, the doctor of illustrious beauty, that spring of life for which pure minds are yearning, and from which they drink and experience Your saving graciousness, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn of Saint Ephrem

O what a beauty to which we are called!
May we realize it through that spiritual beauty
which Your will, Your immortal will evokes in us,
O Lord, even in the midst of this mortal life.

In Your Holy Mysteries, each day we take hold of You,
when we receive You into our body.
Grant us to know from experience
the resurrection we are awaiting.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

We treasure up Your riches in our body, O Lord,
through the grace of holy baptism.
These riches grow at the table of Your Holy Mysteries.
Grant us always to offer thanksgiving for Your grace.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

We joyfully receive within us, O Lord,
Your memorial, at the spiritual table.
In that enactment celebrated at Your commandment
may we possess the reality for which You ordered it.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens....P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O illustrious Ephrem,
may the Lord always hear your prayer
and through His Holy Spirit pour His love into our hearts.

By your prayer, O Ephrem, illustrious among the fathers,
may we come to believe more and more in Jesus,
that streams of life-giving water may pour out from our hearts.

Your crucifixion, O our Saviour,
was the end of Your bodily life,
grant us to accept bodily suffering
as a purification for the life of the Spirit.

May Your resurrection, O Jesus,
make to grow in us the spiritual being,
and may the contemplation of Your mysteries,
lead us to become more and more like You.

Your divine counsels, O our Saviour,
fashion the world spiritually.
Make us eagerly conform ourselves
to that new creation, as spiritual beings.

Lord, do not take away from our souls
the manifestation of Your Holy Spirit.
Do not withdraw from our members
the gentle warmth of Your grace.

Glory be to the Father who chose you from the beginning.
Adoration to the Son who set you up as a hero in His Church.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who through you taught us
to offer glory, honour and adoration. May your prayer be with us.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

JANUARY 29

Translation of the Bones of Ignatius the Fiery [38]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Grant us, Lord our God, that we may honour with faith and love the day of the remembrance of Your athlete, Ignatius the Fiery, the true pastor who cheerfully descended in the arena of suffering to seal his love for You by the libation of his blood. May we imitate his courage and be helped by his prayers, and be worthy of the crown which You gave him in the other world, the joys of which never come to an end, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 103 (102) My soul, give thanks to the Lord...

Response

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
my whole being, bless His holy name.
It is He who redeems our lives from death
and crowns us with love and compassion.

Come, beloved, let us celebrate with love
the holy remembrance of Ignatius the Martyr,
with a humble heart, with sincere and clear voices.
Let our thoughts be filled with holiness
and our tongues pour forth all praises.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us... P.3

Response

Blessed are you, O Saint Ignatius, martyr of Christ.
Today your feast is illustrious in the whole world.
Neither kings nor the powerful rulers gained the victory
which you obtained by your witnessing to Christ.

With joy you offered yourself to be sacrifice
for the sake of your Lord, like a lamb without blemish,
O Saint Ignatius, as you cried out with a loud voice: Neither fire
nor the sword, can separate me from the love of the Lord Jesus.

What I long for is the bread of God
which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of David.
And for drink I long for His blood
which is love incorruptible.

Beloved, implore Christ that I may be a martyr of God.
It is He whom I seek, who died for us.
It is He for whom I long, who is risen for us.
Now is the moment when I shall be born.

O Churches of Christ, worship and praise the Father
who strengthened Ignatius the Fiery, the Son who gave him the victory,
and the Holy Spirit who crowned him
and made him an example for the Churches.
Come, let us bow down to God and worship Him.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to Him by the wine of whose love His labourers were made drunk, and despised all torments, and were made victorious over their persecutors. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

As we celebrate your glorious festival, Ignatius, who were clothed

in the fire of God's love, we recall your heavenly longings when you wrote to the Church of Rome: Do not think of anything else for me but that I should be found worthy to lay down my life for my Master, and pray the Father that I, the bishop of Syria, may readily offer my life for Him in the West, having been sent for this in fetters from the East.

Therefore we beseech your Lord who found you worthy to be the imitator of His passion, and made you find Him by being slain, that as your death was a sacrifice to His majesty, so your bones brought back on this day to Antioch may be a stronghold to protect the Churches of the East. May your commemoration bring abundant peace to your people with seasons of joy, and your zeal be shared by us all, that like you, in life and in death, we may be imitators of our Lord and be transformed in Him and share in His glory, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn of Ignatius *From his Letter to the Romans*

Forgive me, beloved, forgive me,
do not be unseasonably solicitous for me,
leave me to become pasture for the wild beasts.
Through them it is given to me to find God.

As God's wheat, I am to be ground by the teeth of wild beasts
to become the pure bread of Christ.
Make much of them, that they may be my tomb,
that they may leave nothing of my body behind.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

It is then that I shall be truly Christ's disciple,
when the world no longer sees even my body.
Offer prayers to Christ for me,
that I may be counted worthy to be a victim for God.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Forgive me if I tell you what my preference is:
fire, the cross, at close quarters with the beasts.

Let the worst torments fall upon me,
provided that I possess Jesus Christ.

O our Saviour, the dead who received Your body
and drank Your precious blood in the chalice of salvation,
raise them up from the grave without corruption
and clothe them in glory for they have set their hope on You.

Prayer of Incense

Lord God, Jesus Christ, our High Priest,
in Your loving kindness You were pleased
to commit to children of flesh
the keys of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Receive this incense by the prayer of Your martyr bishop,
Ignatius the Fiery, whose memory we celebrate today,
and grant that we may encounter all afflictions like him,
for Your name's sake, and be like him in his courage.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O Ignatius the Fiery,
may the Lord always hear your prayer,
and kindle in our hearts the flame of perfect love.

By your prayer, O Ignatius, glorious among all martyrs,
may the Lord prompt us to seek Him fearlessly,
and to find Him in witnessing to His love.

What tongue is able to speak of your spiritual beauty?
Your words and your life are shining like the sun.
The Churches and the Creation are enlightened by them,
for they make known Him who is the light of the world.

I am longing for death, to reach the fulness of life.
My earthly passions have been crucified.
No desire, no burning for earthly things is left in me,
but a life-giving water which murmurs: Come to the Father.

Beloved, pray for me that I may come through.
Do not hinder me from living by offering myself to death.
Let me receive the pure light by imitating the passion of God.
It is then that I shall be truly man.

Ignatius, you are a fountain of life-giving water.
All who come near and drink from it obtain life.
Your remembrance is a burning and fragrant incense
spread throughout the Churches. Blessed is He who chose you.

Glory to the Father who chose Ignatius from the beginning.
Adoration to the Son who magnifies the day of his remembrance.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit who crowned him with glory.
By his prayer may God be gracious to us. Amen. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
God put a crown of glory on his head,
a crown that lasts for ever.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Ignatius, the beloved of God,
gave his life for the love of Christ.
Man can have no greater love,
than to lay down his life for his friend.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 10:11-18 The Good Shepherd.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us give attention and answer all together with joy and earnestness: Hear us Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who while You extended Your holy hands on the Cross drew all people to You, and the glorious martyrs looked upon You and desired to be made like You, and with the thief on

Your right hand longed to be with You, make us all press towards the goal, God's call to the life above, in You, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, for whose sake the body of Your martyr Ignatius the Fiery was torn to pieces by the wild beasts, on the day of his festival divide Your Body and Blood among this little flock gathered here in Your name, that we may all become one in You, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who in the teaching and in the life of Your servant Ignatius revealed the intensity of people's love for God in imitation of You the Saviour who gave Your life for all, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N....Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N...our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, for the fostering of universal brotherhood among all people beyond distinctions of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world, and harmony be restored among all nations and strengthened in this, our country of India and in the whole creation, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Make us, Lord, imitators of Ignatius in his ardent faith and his evangelical way of life, and by his prayers may we be counted worthy of the lot which has fallen to him in everlasting light, Christ our true God, we beseech You and we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

as on page 351

JANUARY 30

A Prayer Service For Justice and Peace [39]

At the Evening Prayer

From Psalm 72 (71)

O God, give to our leaders Your own justice,
halleluia, halleluia,
give Your righteousness to the rulers of the world.

That they may judge Your people with righteousness,
halleluia, halleluia,
and give their rights to the poor and the oppressed.

Make the mountains and hills bring forth for Your people,
halleluia, halleluia,
peace and prosperity in righteousness.

Make our rulers give judgement infavour of those who are distressed,
halleluia, halleluia,
and rescue their lives from oppression.

Glory be to the Father.... From age to age.....

Common Response

Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
that He may teach us His ways
and we may walk in His paths.
From His mountain comes the word of the Lord.
He will judge between the nations
and bring all peoples together.
They shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into sickles.
Nations will not lift sword against nation,
nor ever will they learn any more to make war.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts... We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord....Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to God the Word who walked the way of suffering to slaughter, and His disciples and all seekers of peace followed Him to death for the reign of peace and justice with love in the world. To Him belongs glory at the time of the celebration of this service for justice and peace, and at all times and seasons and hours and moments of the days of our life, for ever. Amen.

We beseech You, Lord, for the peace of the world, raise up from among all peoples and nations true prophets and planters of the truth, earthly stars on the paths of life, to make humankind to grow into a deeper awareness of the common destiny of the human family and of the solidarity of all peoples of the planet, that while being truly concerned with the course of daily life, and the needs and rights of all that has life, we may be seized in the core of our being with the first and last questions, the true meaning of life, as our crossing over through death to immortality. And may the divine image impressed at the beginning on the human family, be restored in the whole Creation, that it may truly be the Kingdom of God, and the human family as the body of God, holding within itself the fulness of Christ, who encompasses the entire fulness of God, who becomes all in all, over all, through all and in all, for ever. Amen.

Hymn A Prayer for Fearlessness and Peace

Lead us to a world of freedom, O Wise One.
Lead us to heavenly light, to fearlessness and peace.
Strong is Your arm, O Powerful Lord.
We take refuge in You.

May the atmosphere we breathe, breathe in us fearlessness:
fearlessness on earth, fearlessness in heaven,
fearlessness above and below, in front and behind.
O Power of God, grant us freedom from all fear.

May we be without fear of friend or foe,
free from fear of the known and the unknown,
free from fear by night and by day.
May all the world be free from fear.

Peace in the atmosphere. Peace in the astral spaces.
Peace on the earth. Peace in the waters.
Peace in the plants. Peace in the forest trees.
God's peace in the whole creation.
Peace! May peace come to us.

Let not your hearts be troubled. Let them not be afraid.
Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you.
Not as the world gives, do I give to you.
Peace be with you. Receive the Holy Spirit.
He will guide you in all the truth.

(In case the first hymn has been used at the evening prayer the following is used for this service of peace)

Hymn A Prayer of Praise to the Breath of Life

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
The earth was formless. Darkness covered the deep.
But the Spirit of God hovered over the waters...
From the dust God formed Adam into a living creature,
breathing into his nostrils the breath of life.
God's Spirit fills the universe and holds all things together.

Adoration to You, O Breath of Life, who rule the whole creation,
Lord of all on whom all things are based.
Adoration to You, O Breath of Life, adoration to Your uproar.
Adoration to You, thunder, lightning.
When You pour rain upon the plants, they conceive,
leaves and flowers burst forth in great numbers.

Adoration to You, when You come, when You go,
when standing still or when You come to rest.
O Breath of Life, You take care of all living creatures
as a father takes care of his beloved son.

You are supreme, all things revere You, Lord of all,
Lord of whatever breathes and of whatever breathes not.

O Breath of Life, You rule all life, all moving things.
You stay awake when others sleep and never fall down prone.
Turn not Your back on me.
None other than I, shall You be.
As an embryo in the waters bursts into life,
so I, within myself, bind You to me, that I may live.

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

On this day on which we pray for world peace,
give peace to all and keep us by the Cross of Light.

Peace, who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to the human family the joy of peace and unity
and keep them all by Your Cross of Light.

May all nations walk together in love,
may they sit and talk together as united nations.
May there be among them one mind and one heart.
May all Your gifts be shared and enjoyed together.

May we also think and share our thoughts in community.
And our community remain in unity.
Let our minds and hearts be one and our thoughts
flow together to strengthen us in life.

For this we pray together that our aim may be one
and that our hearts may never be divided.
May we all have single-mindedness,
that all may remain happy and in unity.

Peace, who reconcile those in heaven and those on earth,
give to the human family the joy of peace and unity
and keep them all by Your Cross of Light.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Do not seize the fields that you covet,
and take over the houses as well,
the man himself as well as his inheritance.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
The Lord's will is to give peace in the land,
that you may rest with no one to frighten you.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Each man will sit under his own vine,
under his own fig tree in peace.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Jn 16:20-33 I have said this to you that in Me you may have peace.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, on this day, for peace and justice in the world, let us stand well and answer all together with fervent longing and great earnestness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

For all those who exercise power in the public affairs of humankind, that they may hear and heed the cry for justice and peace in the world, we beseech You:

Hear us Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

For all those who hold posts of responsibility, civil or religious, at local, national or international level, that they may establish just and fair laws against violence and its causes, and that they may always hold up harmony and peace among the nations and their people, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

For all believers, in churches, temples, mosques, synagogues, gurdwaras, pagodas and all places of worship throughout the earth

who have been touched by the Spirit to work for the creation of a new world, that they may never give up prayer and meditation for this purpose, but rather seek unceasingly a conversion of the heart accompanied with a spirit of sacrifice, humility and self-restraint for the furthering of justice, development, liberation and peace, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

For the communities all over the world, who in our times seek to live with a sense of human solidarity in the just sharing of food, energy, material necessities of existence, that they may carry in their life the Gospel of planetary citizenship, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

For all those who in the light of the One Godhead have perceived the essential interdependence of all beings and all things in this universe, that they may work unwearily for a greater awareness among all people, of the One Ground of Being, source of the essential and profound harmony to be preserved between the human family and the world of nature, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

For our families, our schools and colleges and all religious communities that they may foster among us and our people a fresh sense of awe with love before the mystery of existence, doing away with corruption and standing for non-violence and truth, humble and courageous self-restraint in the conduct of personal and social life, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Christ our God, who dwell in the holy heights but also with the oppressed and the lowly, as You experienced the anointing of the Spirit to announce a day of peace and to revive the heart of the downtrodden, to give the oil of gladness instead of mourning and a song of praise instead of a hopeless spirit, create new hearts in us that we may all work with determination and steadfastness to

hasten Your salvation, Your work of reconciliation, of peace and righteousness, justice with love, and we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Note: The two hymns of our prayer service are taken from the sacred scriptures of India, yet also related to the Bible as shown in the references here below:

I A Prayer for Fearlessness and Peace. Atharva-Veda XIX 15; Rig-Veda VII 66; quoted from Abinash Chandra Bose, Hymns from the Vedas, pp. 105 and 217. Amended. With John 14:27 and 16:12.

II A Prayer of Praise to the Breath of Life. Genesis 1:1-2; 2:7, with Atharva Veda XL iv. Hymn on Prana. Quoted from Zaehner, Hindu Scriptures, Everyman's Library 944, London, 1906, p.27. Amended. Selected stanzas.

(Both hymns are used in Volume I on Tuesdays and Wednesdays pp.73 and 101.)

FEBRUARY 2

Entrance of our Lord into the Temple[40]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord, Gracious God and Lover of Humankind, that we may minister to You by our lives like Joseph the Just, and bear You gloriously and embrace You in our hearts like Mary Your Mother, and receive You in our arms and carry You like Simeon the Venerable Old Man, and praise You with Anna the Prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Psalm 40 (39): 1-12;17-18 I waited, I waited for the Lord...

Response

I waited, waited for the Lord
and He bent down to me and heard my cry...
O Lord, Your wonderful purposes are all for our good.
You have no equal, none can compare with You...

To save men made of dust God descends into Sheol.
To the prisoners He grants liberty and salvation.
To the blind sight, to the dumb a voice to chant.
You are blessed, Lord, the Strong, God of our fathers.

A spear of bitter pains shall pierce your heart,
O you who are all holy, said Simeon to the Mother of God.
When you shall see your Son on the Cross you will cry:
You are blessed, Lord, the Strong, God of our fathers.

You whom the Fiery Ones hallow with fear and trembling
the Venerable Old Man Simeon carries in his arms!

You who are the Creator and Fashioner of all,
are carried into the temple with offerings, like an infant!

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us.... P.3

Response

Simeon the Venerable Old Man, a true son of Abraham,
had been told by the Holy Spirit
that he would not taste death nor the descent into Sheol
before seeing the Christ, the Lord who comes.

Mary carried Him who is more ancient than the days,
with a pair of turtle doves or two small pigeons.
She entered the temple and saw Simeon
who began to beseech the Lord: Now let me rest in peace.

Light which enlightens the nations which believe in You,
and glory of Your people Israel,
You have fulfilled Your promise that I should see You.
Now that I have seen You, allow me to rest in peace, Lord.

The Venerable Old Man Simeon said to the Virgin:
This Child is set both for the rising and the fall of many.
As for you, your heart will be pierced through and through by sorrow,
as by a spear, that the secret thoughts of people might be laid bare.

Glory to Christ who manifests Himself at Jerusalem
as a little child, according to the prophecy of David.
The Good Old Man carries Him and prays that he may be allowed
to depart, for he perceives that He is the One who held him back.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to Him who is high and lofty in His Godhead and without beginning in His Being, who was pleased to be subject to time by His birth, and to offer gifts in the temple as it had been written in the ordinances of the Law, and to be carried in the arms

of Simeon the Venerable Old Man within the temple which was the dwelling place of His Godhead. To Him, the Good One, belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Mighty Lord of the Ages, who are equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit in essence and in everlastingness, You were pleased at the end of time to become man from the Virgin Mother of God. You took upon You all that belongs to us apart from sin and You fulfilled the Entrance into the Temple, according to the ordinances of the Law. When the Revered Old Man Simeon who was awaiting You as the One who was to bring consolation to Your people was moved by the Spirit, he ran joyfully and bore You and carried You in his arms, because he was assured that You are true God, the Light of the nations and the Glory of Your people. You who are the Fulfilment of the Mysteries, offered for the purification of our nature a couple of pigeons or two turtle doves, according to the Law, and by this You showed that You are the Lord of both Covenants, the Old and the New. Then You heard the supplication of the Venerable Old Man addressed to You, when he said: Behold, my eyes have seen Your graciousness, let me depart now in peace. For he knew that You are He who has authority over life and over death.

So we also now beseech You, Lord God, make us worthy that by Your manifold and deep Mysteries we may receive You in the mystical tabernacles of our hearts, and embrace You with the visible arms of our bodies. And may our lips stammer praises to You with awe. Enable us to celebrate Your holy festivals in a manner befitting You and above all this festival of Your Entrance into the Temple, when by fulfilling the law You set free those who were shut up in bondage and found those who were wandering in error and felt lost. On all the days of our life we will present ourselves as a pure and holy sacrifice and an acceptable offering which may be pleasing to You, and offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Simeon had a vision of the Holy Spirit who said to him:
You shall not taste death and not descend into Sheol
before you have seen the Christ, the Great King of Glory.

And when he had seen Him he besought Him and said:
Let me rest in peace since my eyes have seen Your compassion.
Glory to You and to Him who sent You.

Simeon carried the Christ into the temple and besought Him:
I beg You, let me depart in peace,
since my eyes have seen Your compassion and Your holy salvation.
You are the true hope on account of which the creation was expecting
that the image of Adam would be renewed
and the deceits of the Evil One brought to nothing.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Simeon saw the Son of God and in his joy he ran to meet Him,
as he awaited His birth before he would taste death.
He carried the Master of Life on the palms of his hands
and besought Him earnestly: Now take away my life!
Glory to the Hidden One who was pleased to manifest Himself
to redeem Adam and to deliver him from his enslavement to sin.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

The heights and the depths and the whole creation
are filled with Him and are too narrow for Him.
They cannot contain His greatness, but behold, He descends
and is enclosed in the Virgin's womb according to His will.
Mary who brought Him forth ascends with Him to the temple.
Simeon fondles Him and embraces Him.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

We worship You, Christ our God,
who are hidden and beyond comprehension,
yet today You ascend to Jerusalem carried in the arms of Mary
to make offerings according to the law. By a simple gesture
You uphold heaven and earth and all that is in them,
yet Simeon carries You in his weak and aged arms.

Accept then, Lord of the Universe, the offering of our incense
and loosen from us all the entanglements of sin;
that while we carry You in our hearts,
by the celebration of Your Manifold and Divine Mysteries
we may offer unceasing praise and thanksgiving,
to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

The generations pass, succeeding one another
and the Venerable Old Man stands there.
Blessed is He who made all generations and does not pass away.

The clouds carried Him with mighty power
when He entered into Egypt, and behold, in the temple
Simeon took Him in his arms and carried Him, the Lord of all places.

Mary bearing gifts carries Him who receives all gifts.
She presents her offering in the holy temple,
a pair of turtle doves carried by Joseph to redeem her Son.
They ascend to the temple to offer them according to the law.

The Spirit calls to the Venerable Old Man Simeon: Go and receive Him.
As He has bound you, so He will set you free. Arise, old man.
Ask the Child for your deliverance, O high priest.
The Maker of sacrifices has come to give you rest.

Moved by the Spirit Simeon trembled on account of the Child.
But seeing the Virgin he joined his hands in reverence.
He bowed down with devotion and received the Child with love.
He took the Truth in his arms and spoke to Him.

Glory to the Father who kept the Venerable Old Man to see the Christ.
Adoration to the Son who strengthened Simeon
while He was carried in his arms. Thanksgiving to the Holy Spirit
who broke his bonds. One nature in three, to You be praise.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
My eyes have looked for Your salvation
and for the proclamation of Your rule.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
Now my eyes have seen Your light,
the light that reveals Your path to the nations
and gives glory to Your people.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

Luke 2:22-35 Jesus presented in the temple in Simeon's hands.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us give attention and answer all together with joy and exultation: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who today allowed Yourself to be carried in the arms of Simeon and You released him from the bonds of life, loose from us, all the entanglements of sin and make us carry You in our hearts by the celebration of Your Divine Mysteries, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who were brought to the temple in Jerusalem to be manifested as the Saviour of the world, reveal Yourself to our generation as the true liberator of the human family, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who today were presented to Your Father in the temple, grant us to be presented to Him in that new Jerusalem where there is no more temple, since the Lord God and the Lamb are themselves the temple, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for our fathers in the faith who minister to us with love, our holy father N... Pope of Rome and Head of the Catholic Church, our fathers, N... our Metropolitan Archbishop, N...our Bishop, N...our Auxiliary Bishop and the bishops and clergy and people all over the world, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray for the peace and serenity of all ashrams and monasteries and their services to the people, for the strengthening of universal brotherhood among all people beyond distinctions of race, caste and belief, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, we pray that justice with love may reign all over the world, and harmony be restored among all nations and preserved in this our country of India and in the whole creation, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Grant, Christ our God, that as Simeon found peace by recognizing You as Saviour, the Churches who are the sacrament of unity and salvation may truly manifest You to the world and build up peace in it, and we will cry and say three times:

Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God... P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord...P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you... P.7

Response

With those on high, the heads of the angelic powers,
we bless You and we praise You as we say:
Glory to You, Creator of all creatures.

Mary went up to the temple carrying the Living Son of God
to make an offering for Him
who is the Receiver of all offerings.

The Virgin offered in the temple
a pair of turtle doves and two pigeons for the Son of the Father.
To Him be glory, the Saviour of the whole creation.

Carrying the Son of God in his arms the Venerable Old Man Simeon
besought Him: Let me go in peace, my Lord, as You had promised,
now that my eyes have seen Your compassion.

It is good to offer praise and glory,
adoration and the highest honour
to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
one true God, to Him be glory.

FIRST WATCH

Psalm 24(23) The Lord's is the earth...

Response

Lift up your heads, you gates,
lift yourselves up, you everlasting doors,
that the King of Glory may come in,
the Lord strong and mighty, carried in the arms of His Mother.

Come in peace, O Image of Your Father.
Glory to You and to Him who sent You,
who lowered Yourself for our salvation.
Who is able to praise You?

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Exalted One who is carried on swift clouds, the glorious throne of His Godhead, and lowered Himself, and emptied Himself of His own will...and today entered the temple carried in the arms of Simeon, and offered a perfect sacrifice in His humanity. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Praise to You King of all, Maker and Wise Governor of the Universe who on account of Your graciousness made Your descent to the earth of Your own will. And to announce Your conception You sent an angel who gave joy to the Virgin by his greeting of peace and called out to her: The Lord is with you, blessed among women. And when You had fulfilled nine months within her womb You came to birth in the flesh and were held in the arms of earthly beings and were seen in the form of a child. And as You went up to the temple like a son of man You filled with awe and joy those who saw You. From now on, those in bondage are set free, the altar of mysteries exults because it has seen its Lord in the flesh. Mary Your Mother marvels, Joseph the Just is filled with wonder, Simeon the

Venerable Old Man rejoices and is set on fire with love for You, and humbly cries to You and says: Let me now depart in peace, Lord, because my eyes have seen Your compassion. I will be a messenger to the dead and make them know concerning the life and salvation which I have seen. This is a day of joy and exultation, this day on which I have seen Your compassion and my expectation has been fulfilled. On this day I dance with Anna the Prophetess and I praise the glorious Lord and say: God is the Lord and He has become a Saviour to us. He is my God. I praise Him.

And now we beg of You, Lord, our Lord, that You will receive from us the spiritual sacrifices which we offer to You today. Bless us, Lord, as You blessed the Venerable Old Man Simeon who carried You in his arms, even as we carry You in holy love within our hearts in the Holy Mystery of Your Body and Your Blood. And, as with him, may the end of our lives be in the perfection of virtue, that we may depart from this world in Your praise and that of Your Father and of Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Blessed are you, Simeon, who carried in your arms
Him who fills the heavens, and they are too small for Him.
You took Him into the sanctuary, like an infant,
the Child who is older than all generations, older than the worlds.

Blessed are you whose arms were like a chariot for Him
in whose honour the Fiery Ones and the Winged Creatures are yoked.
And you entreated Him: My Lord, let me depart in peace,
You the Light to be manifested to all the nations.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The Eternal Word of the Father who is beyond all comprehension
was born of a daughter of David in Bethlehem,
and presented to the priest according to the law,
He who is in the heights with the Father, hidden in His Being.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Simeon praised God who granted him to behold His Beloved Son.
He received Him and carried Him in his arms into the sanctuary.
This Child, he said to Mary, is for the fall and the salvation of many,
and a sword will pierce through your own heart also,
that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.

MEDITATION

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord... P.8

Psalm 84(83) How lovely is Your dwelling place, Lord....

Response

How lovely is Your dwelling place, Lord, God of all cosmic forces!
Our spirits are yearning, we long for the courts of the Lord.
Our hearts and our flesh shout for gladness to the Living God.

Come, let us enter the temple with Joseph, Mary and Jesus.
Let us think of them. Let us learn from them about God's wonders,
and like them also offer our lives to God.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise....

Praise...to Him who is lofty in nature but whose Godhead was lowered to weakness, and He was carried by the aged Simeon, the Venerable Old Man, to Him who is the Receiver of offerings and for whom offerings were made, and for whose salvation the Revered Old Man waited. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Eternal Son of the Father who are seated on high on a throne of glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit, You were born at the

end of time of the Virgin Mary, by a birth free in every way from passion and sin, by which You delivered us from the evil that came through Eve, our mother. When You offered the sacrifice according to the law at Jerusalem, the Venerable Old Man Simeon who was bent with age carried You in his arms. He who waited for the restoration of his people saw and rejoiced and prophesied the saving passion by which all of us should be redeemed.

Therefore, we beseech Your compassion, Lord, incline Yourself in Your mercy and receive from us the prayer and supplication which we offer in Your presence on this holy festival of Your Entrance into the Temple. Make us worthy with Simeon the prophet to receive You in our hearts, and with Anna the daughter of Phanuel to offer You pure sacrifices of thanksgiving on the altar above. And may we be worthy of the general resurrection and of the universal renewal, for Your glory, Christ our God and that of Your Father and of Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Lord, our Lord, it is You whom Ezekiel saw on the four-faced chariot,
who today enter the Temple as a child with pigeons and turtle doves.
And Simeon the Venerable Old Man
who had been looking for You for a long time,
beseeches You to let him depart from this life.

Lord, our Lord, glory to You from all mouths,
who for our sake became an infant of flesh.
And You went up to the temple to offer gifts,
according to the law given to the house of Levi, halleluia.
And Simeon the Venerable Old Man took You in his arms
and acclaimed You and praised Your Holy Name.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Simeon the Just perceived the coming of the Son, his Lord and Saviour,
and besought Him: Let me go and depart and rest in peace,
now that I have seen You who came to be sacrifice and high priest
and to do away with all former sacrifices.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

On the day of the Entrance of our Lord into the Temple,
Simeon rejoices exceedingly when the dew of Life
is sprinkled on his hands in his old age.
Behold, by the Blessed Plant that shoots forth from Mary
the hunger of the nations is satisfied,
and the thirst of the world is quenched.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia....P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens...P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Our Lord, be gracious to us on this holy festival.

And on that feast which shall not come to an end
give us a place at Your right hand.

The Light has shone that enlightens every one born in the world.
We all, beloved, must come to the Light to be enlightened.
Let none of us doubt or remain behind,
none of us should remain in the darkness.

Let us proceed straightway and go to meet the Light
like the prophet Simeon who received the Light from Light.

With him let us exult with our whole being,
offering thanksgiving to the Father of all light.

From God comes the salvation offered to all men,
manifested today for the consolation of His people.
Simeon having seen the Christ is set free from the bonds of life,
may we also now be set free from the fetters of sin.

Glory to You, Firstborn of all festivals,
who magnify Your Church on Your feast day.
Glory to You from this, Your assembly,
and to Your Father and to the Holy Spirit.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ...P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

FEBRUARY 19

Ephrem and Isaac
The Great Teachers of Prayer[41]

Evening Prayer

Hymn for the Lighting of the Lamp P.3

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Opening Prayer

Lord God, grant that we may grow to maturity by the spirit of the prophets, and be strengthened in the faith by the example of the apostles, and our lives be ennobled by the victory of the martyrs, our minds be enlightened by the wisdom of the doctors, and our hearts enlarged with the perfection of all the saints, that we may keep the festival of our great teachers Ephrem and Isaac with the purity and joy which are pleasing to You, so that we may one day rejoice with them in Your Kingdom, our Lord and our God for ever. Amen.

Psalm 19(18) The heavens proclaim the glory of God...

Response

From pride preserve Your servants, never let it dominate over us,
O Lord, then only shall we be free from grave sin.
May the words of our mouths always find favour in Your presence
and the silent whisperings of our hearts be well pleasing to You.
Your word shines clear, it gives light to our minds.
It is sweeter than honey, pure honey from the comb.

By the wonderful testimony of your way of life, O chosen ones,
Ephrem and Isaac, noble doctors of the Syrian Churches,
you put on Christ as your garment, and by His Holy Spirit
He unveiled for you the mysteries of divine wisdom

to teach the believers to proclaim: You are blessed for ever,
God of our fathers, Lord of the whole creation.

Evening Psalms We call upon You, Lord, hear us...P.3

Response

Blessed is He who magnifies the day of your remembrance
in the Churches who are adorned with your beauty,
O chosen Ephrem and Isaac, noble doctors of the Syrians.
May your prayer assist us.

Blessed is He who by your commemoration
rejoices the heavenly ones and the earthly ones,
O holy fathers, Ephrem of Nisibis and Isaac of Nineveh.
May your prayer assist us.

By the shining light of your teachings,
may the Lord dispel the darkness that comes on us,
that we may serve Him in wholly new purity
and with enlightened understanding.

May He grant us to know by experience the new life in Him,
when the heart is filled with the joy that does not pass away.
Through faithfulness in His service may He fill our minds
with the peace that surpasses all understanding.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise... to Him who by His saving coming trod the way of life, by which the earthly ones journey to the Heavenly Kingdom, and moved the fathers of the Church by His Holy Spirit to reveal the hidden secrets of His truth and to teach the mysteries of His divine knowledge. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of evening...

Praise and thanksgiving to You Jesus Christ our God, who raised in Your Holy Church two doctors of light that they might enlighten her at all times, and reveal to Your people the hidden things of Your wisdom,

of whom one was Ephrem, deacon and monk of Nisibis, and the other Isaac the hermit priest, called the Syrian, illustrious among the solitaries of the region of Nineveh and of Persia. We keep their memory in common, remembering before You the beauty of their way of life, that we may be helped by their prayer and enriched by the grace that You make to flow from their teachings. We are set on fire with Your love and strengthened in the true faith which they taught us by their words and writings. And as they endured great afflictions, we are made strong and firm by the hope for which they lived. Who is able to tell the story of their holiness and perfection of virtue? The mountains and rocks where they lived in communion with You and with the whole creation bear witness to the loftiness of their asceticism, humility and purity, austerity of life and assiduity in watching and prayer. All their writings bear the scent of conversion to You, with the repentance that softens the heart, however hard it may be.

Therefore, we who celebrate their common remembrance beseech You, Lord, by their prayers, that we may grow in poverty of spirit and purity of heart and experience the beatitudes and other virtues to which, in Your Gospel, You promised a blessing for those who labour in them. And we will offer praise and thanksgiving to You and to Your Father and to Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

O Ephrem, God led your heart captive with His love
and enlightened your mind with divine wisdom.
He filled you with great zeal for the life of the Churches,
to spread the true doctrine through your spiritual hymns.
Streams of divine teaching flowed from your heart
to quench the thirst of all the true believers.

When Ambrose of Milan was persecuted by the emperor,
the believers kept vigil in the Church, in constant prayer,
and introduced the practice of singing hymns and psalms
in keeping with the usage of the Eastern Churches.
And their example was followed in many other places
in almost all the Churches throughout the world.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Isaac, you made illustrious the region of Nineveh.
When you had become exercised in the writings of the Church,
you withdrew into the solitude of the mountains,
where you penetrated deeply into the Divine mysteries,
and wrote spiritual books on the behaviour of solitaries.
Be to us a great teacher of prayer and of spiritual perfection.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

Placid, humble and kind with all, your speech was gentle,
and you left us volumes full of sweet doctrine and life.
Because of the unceasing reading of the holy books
you became blind, but the brothers wrote down your teachings
on what you had attained by meditation of the Scriptures,
the teachings of the great fathers and your spiritual experience.

May the dew of life sent from the Father,
and sprinkled on the young men in the furnace of Babylon
be shed upon the dead in the gloomy dwelling places of Sheol.
And may He pardon the transgressions of His servants,
those who rest in His hope, that they may inherit the Kingdom
which does not pass away and will not be destroyed.

Prayer of Incense

May this sweet incense which we offer to You
on the day of the remembrance of Your great doctors,
Ephrem the monk deacon of Nisibis and Isaac the hermit priest,
be pleasing to Your Lordship, Lord of lords.

May our praise and thanksgiving propitiate Your Godhead
and, joined with their prayer, be acceptable in Your sight,
that in tranquillity, peace, love, sweetness and joy,
we may praise You with Your Father and Your Holy Spirit.

Supplication Song

Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

May your prayer be with us, O saint Isaac,

may the Lord always hear your prayer,
and through His Holy Spirit pour His love into our hearts.

By your prayer, O Ephrem, illustrious among the fathers,
may we come to believe more and more in Jesus,
that streams of life-giving water may pour out from our hearts.

O the beauty of prayer with tears, so dear to Isaac,
by which the heart recovers the purity of our Creator;
the mind shines forth with light and insight,
and the spirit is illumined, filled with peace and serenity.

As at times the radiance of the sun is hidden,
some unexplained darkness may fall upon the mind.
The heart should not be troubled or fall into dejection,
but patiently occupy itself with the writings of divine teachers,
and gently force itself to prayer, looking up for help.

Tears during prayer are a sign of divine mercy,
a sign that our repentance has been accepted;
the heart enters the plain of peace and serenity,
and the mind finds the wisdom and power that come from grace.

Glory to the Father who delights in the prayer of the heart.
Adoration to the Son who teaches perseverance in prayer.
Thanksgiving to the Spirit whose joy we experience in prayer,
and who gave to saint Isaac the gift of prayer with tears.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Acclamations

Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
There is a stream whose waters gladden the city of God.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.
If anyone is thirsty let him come to Me.
Ephrem and Isaac believed and drank deep.
Streams of life-giving water poured out from their hearts.
Halleluia, halleluia, halleluia.

John 7 :37-39 A The springs of life-giving water.

Intercessions As we offer prayers to the Lord, let us pay attention and answer all together with joy and gladness: Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who raised up our fathers Ephrem and Isaac, the great doctors of the Syrian Churches, like living pillars to edify the whole building of perfection, give to Your people the understanding of Your ways with us, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Christ our God, who made to flow over all the earth streams of life-giving water according to Your true and infallible promise through the lives and writings of our fathers Ephrem and Isaac, as they taught us by word and deed, make to flow to us from their hearts waters of life, we beseech You:

Hear us, Lord, and be gracious to the whole world.

Concluding Prayer

Christ our God, grant that we may have a faith like that of our fathers Ephrem and Isaac, truly evangelical, that we may receive a part like them in eternal light, by their intercession, we beseech You, Lord, and we will cry three times:

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION

Night Vigil

Doxology Glory be to the Father... P.1

Trisagion Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord... P.1

AWAKENING SERVICE

Opening Prayer Awaken us, Lord... P.7

Night Psalms Bless, Lord! Bless the Lord, all you...P.7

Response

It is good and fair to rise early to praise You, our Creator,
and with the angels to make a joyful noise,
singing the threefold hallowing: Holy! Holy! Holy are You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

As the angels keep vigil and never cease to praise You,
awaken us also, earthly ones, to praise You with them.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is Christ who bestowed on you the charism of teaching
and made the Churches to shine with the loftiness of your way of life.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Blessed is the Holy Spirit who unveiled for you
the deep mysteries hidden in the Sacred Scriptures.
Glory to You, glory to You, glory to You, O God.
In Your tenderness be gracious to all, O Compassionate One.

Glory to Him who is one in three and the three are one,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one true God,
Supreme Abode whom pure minds yearn for,
Glorious Trinity, Source and Consummation of all things.

FIRST WATCH

(As on the Feast of Saint Ephrem on January 28, p.573)

SECOND WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Psalm 43(42) Defend me, O God, and plead my cause...

Response

Send forth Your light and Your truth to guide us, Lord,
and lead us to Your holy mountain, Your dwelling place.
Then we shall be with You, O God of our joy,
and we will praise You on the harp, O God of our delight.

Father, You have given them to Me.
I desire that they be with Me where I am,
that they may contemplate My glory, the glory You give Me,
You who loved Me before the world was made.

Eucharistic Prayer *Sedro*

Let us lift up our hearts. We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us offer praise to the Lord...Compassionate Lord, we praise...

Praise...to the Eternal Word of the Father who gives wisdom to the renowned fathers, and by whose grace they teach us the way of spiritual perfection. To Him belongs glory, honour and adoration, at this time of the Night Vigil...

Praise and thanksgiving to You, Jesus Christ, our Master and Teacher, who were led by the Spirit into the desert, and in solitary places on the mountains, and spent there days and nights in prayer to God. Praise to You who called Your servant Isaac to follow You in the solitary life. And when he had been called to preside over the Church of Nineveh and could not endure the pastoral ministry, You led him back to his beloved solitude among the hermits in the mountains to minister before You alone. You taught him the way of

spiritual perfection, the prayer of the heart, free from all cares and disturbances, which gives to the mind a delicious taste and sweet insights in the mystery of Your love, exalted above the senses, when grace opens the eyes of the mind to perceive things which eye has not seen and ear of flesh cannot hear. Yet this did not put Your servant beyond temptation. As he himself confesses, when he would fail to command the spirit and had no courage to fall upon his face in prayer like You at Gethsemani, he would wrap his head in his shawl and simply lie down waiting on You until the hour of darkness was over.

We beseech You, therefore, O Lord, who impressed on the mind of Your disciples the need to persevere in prayer and to be unceasing in it, strengthen us, Your worshippers, that we may overcome weariness at prayer, for such temptation befalls those who set out to walk all the way of spiritual attainment, and who have built their house on the rock of faith, on You and Your Father and Your Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever. Amen.

Hymn

Through the experience of the saints
may we realize the beauty and glory to which we are called!
It made the martyrs drunk with love.
It drove the apostles to the far ends of the earth.
It made monks to go homeless in the wilderness,
and to make their dwelling on high mountains.

A lover of solitude and unceasing prayer, Isaac,
you taught your disciples the need of a compassionate heart,
a heart burning with love for the whole creation,
for humans, for birds and beasts, and for the humble blade of grass,
even for demons and for all that exists.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

A compassionate heart is a heart that becomes soft like flesh,
so that at the recollection or at the sight of any creature,

the eyes shed tears on account of the vehemence of affection
which moves it with intense love and compassion.
A compassionate heart cannot bear to hear or see any injury
or the slightest suffering of anything in the creation.

From age to age and for ever. Amen.

A compassionate heart at all times offers prayers with tears,
even for irrational beings and the enemies of the truth,
as well as for those who harm him, so that they may find mercy,
prayers even for reptiles, a sign of the great compassion
which is poured out in the heart,
beyond measure, after the likeness of God.

MEDITATION

THIRD WATCH

Acclamations Blessed be the glory of the Lord...P.8

Service of the Resurrection Give rest, Lord.... P.9

FOURTH WATCH

Service of the Communion of Saints Halleluia, halleluia...P.11

Cosmic Praise Praise the Lord from the heavens....P.13

Supplication Song Lord, be gracious to us and help us.

Lord, be gracious to us by the prayer of Your servants.

By the prayer of those who loved You so much,
pardon us and be gracious to the whole world.

Who would not proclaim blessed
those who are for us fountains of holy teachings?

Who would not offer praise with joy to God for our fathers,
Ephrem and Isaac, the sweet springs of life?

On this day on which we celebrate your remembrance,
holy and glorious teachers of prayer,
pray and ask from your Lord
to make His peace reign all over the creation.

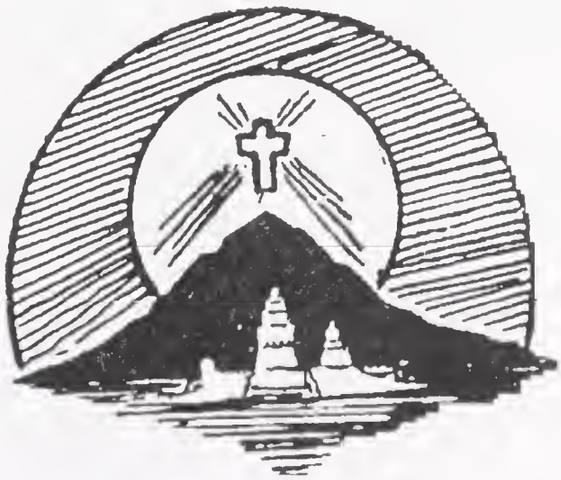
O saints Ephrem and Isaac,
never cease to offer supplication to God for His people.
And may the wisdom of your teachings
always be resplendent in the Holy Churches.

Glory to the Father who chose you both,
illustrious saint Ephrem and Noble Isaac.
Thanksgiving to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, a shout of joy.
And on us His love and graciousness for ever.

Concluding Prayer Lord Jesus Christ... P.6

Trisagion Holy are You, O God...P.6

MEDITATION



NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. *Penqitho* is a Syriac word meaning volume, book, like the Greek word *biblos.* Used as a name it designates the Book of books. Yet here it does not refer to the Sacred Scriptures but to the Prayer of the Church. Only two editions are available. The Catholic edition published by Ignatius George Schelhot, Patriarch of the Syrian Church of Antioch, under the care of the Dominican Friars, at Mosul, Iraq, from 1886 to 1896, counts seven volumes. The Syrian Orthodox edition published in 1962-'63 by the late Catholicos Baselios Geeverghese II, at the Mar Julios Press, Pambakuda, Kerala, consists of three volumes only. It is restricted to the parts that are sung by the priest and the congregation, the hymns: *qole, madroshe, soghite, bo'uthe* with their responses: *enione, qonune, kurokho* arranged for the celebration of the Canonical Prayers on Sundays and feasts throughout the year. The Catholic edition which bears also a latin title: *Breviarium iuxta Ritum Ecclesiae Anntiochenae* gives the fully structured services in extenso. It includes, besides the hymns and their responses, all the prayers generally reserved to the presiding priest or the deacon: *sloutho, etro, koruzutho, proemion, and sedro,* even the Bible readings of the Old and New Testaments, except the psalms which are simply indicated by their number and the first words, according the Peshitta version.

2. P. 193

3. Prayer with the Harp.... Vol. 1, p.141

4. Prayer with the Harp...Vol. I, p.46

5. Luke 4:18-21

6. P. 526

7. P. 517

8. P. 580

9. P. 22

10. P. 20
11. P. 23
12. P. 107
13. P. 97
14. Romans 8: 22-23
15. P. 455 - 456 2nd day after Nativity Eg Hymn, Ist stanza
16. P. 186 - 87
17. P. 49 and 54
18. P. 497
19. John 6:47
20. Emmanuel-Pataq Siman, L'Experience de L'Esprit par l'Eglise d'apres la Tradition Syrienne d'Antioche. Paris 1971, p.20.
21. P.Y.Saeki, The Nestorian Documents... in China, Tokyo 1951, p.314, and K.S. Latourette, A History of Christianity, London 1955 p.324.
22. Book IX Chapter VII. See also the testimony of Theodore of Mopsueste; "The kind of psalmody which we call *antiphons* were translated in Greek from the Syriac." Dom Jeannin, Melodies liturgiques syriennes et chaldeennes, Beyrouth 1923 Vol. II, P. 16
23. Eucharist, Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer, London, 1968, p. 245.
24. S. Brock, The Harp of the Spirit, Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, London, 1983, pp. 10-14.
25. On the various computations of the liturgical seasons see, H.W. Codrington, Studies on the Syrian Liturgies, London 1952, p.47. Our computation is found in Mss Add 18714 of the XIII century, British Museum.
26. A. Raes, Anaphorae Syriacae, Rome 1939-1953.

27. At the origins, when the *Penqitho* was first composed and used as manuscript, each bishop *ordered* it for his own eparchy according to his liturgical insights. Monasteries did the same for their own communities. Yet all followed the same inner framework. This type of liturgical freedom and adaptability should still be followed in our own days. From a letter of father E.R. Hambye S.J. to the author, May 7, 1982.

28. Quoted by Robert Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom. A Study in Early Syriac Tradition, Cambridge University Press, 1975, p. 38.

29. The Examiner, Bombay, December 18, 1982.

NOTES TO THE PRAYER SERVICES

1. In the Responses of the psalms of the day, the first stanza is generally taken from the psalm itself, as a word of life, to bring out the relation of this psalm to the mystery celebrated. Those who look for a shorter form of service could leave out the psalm as the response reflects its meaning for this particular day. The *Penqitho* published by the Orthodox Church of Kerala, does not include such psalms, and of course also no response.

2. To the deacon's martial, *Stoumen kalos*, a Greek acclamation which passed into the Syriac: "Let us stand well," answered by the congregation, *Kurie eleison*, we have substituted invitatory and exhortative acclamations. *Let us lift up our hearts... We lift them up to the Lord. Let us offer praise to the Lord and beg for the mercy of His grace. Compassionate Lord we praise Your wonderful Name show us Your mercy.* In preference to *Sedro* which means ordered prayer we have used *Eucharistic Prayer.* We feel that this is not only more intelligible but also more conducive to attune the hearts of the participants to the nature of these prayers which are specifically eucharistic. While we have truly here a structured prayer, *eucharistic* refers to the biblical prayer par excellence, the *Berakah*, prayer of praise and thanksgiving to God for His great works in our favour: creation and salvation, concluded with petitions. The most ancient pattern of such prayer can be seen in the blessing of Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, after Abraham's victory over his enemies, Gen. 14:20. A more impressive form, fully developed, is the prayer of the early Christian community preserved in the Acts of the Apostles, 4:24-31, where it is presented as a spontaneous common prayer offered after the Great Sanhedrin of Jerusalem, Israel's Supreme Court, by fear of riots, had released Peter and John. When the community heard what the chief priests and elders had said to the two: They raised their voices together and said: Sovereign Lord, Maker of heaven and earth, and all that

they contain, it is You also who said through the Holy Spirit... and now, Lord help Your servants to proclaim Your message with boldness...

3 As we have usually used only one of the two hymns given in the *Penqitho*. The prayer for the offering of incense, *etro*, comes then after this hymn, before the *bo'utho*, our Supplication Song.

4 Ancient Liturgies use much—often relentlessly repeat—Only Son or Only-begotten Son as the name of Jesus. As this reflects to a great extent the christological controversies of the first centuries, we have taken the liberty of substituting in many instances other revealed names more evocative for us, as the Beloved, the Well-beloved or the One Beloved Son. Cfr Mt 3:17; Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22. Also, the Uniquely Beloved Son.

5 Gospel Acclamations and Intercessions. Our Acclamations before the Gospel are an expansion of the *hulollo* of the *Penqitho*, which consists of a single verse of a psalm chanted with halleluia. Our expansion adds, as a counterpart, a verse generally taken from the New Testament. Similarly the *koruzutho*, the Intercessions that follow the Proclamation of the Gospel have been considerably expanded. This has been done with a view to updating these prayers in the light of the signs of the times: a better formulation of the petitions of the praying community for the life of the Churches and the needs of the world. We have also taken a deeper awareness of the solidarity of all peoples and of the common destiny of the human family.

6 Second Sunday after the Nativity of our Lord. This Sunday is called in our *Penqitho*, Sunday after the Circumcision, a feast now replaced by the celebration of the Naming of Jesus. We have therefore related this Sunday to the Nativity, as the Second Sunday after the Nativity of our Lord, as in the Orthodox *Penqitho*.

7. Sundays after the Baptism and Epiphany of our Lord. During this season, whose length varies according to the date of the Resurrection extending sometimes over eight weeks, the *Penqitho,* except for the *Sedros* of the first five Sundays, gives only a collection of prayers for all the Sundays after the feast. Hence a selection had to be made with discernment. As the material supplied for this purpose by the *Penqitho* is considerable, we have been able to provide proper prayers for each of the eight Sundays. Only the Supplication Songs had to be duplicated and even triplicated.

8. Pq III p. 24. This is a remarkable hymn, truly representative of the tradition of prayer created by Saint Ephrem. The Supplication Song is on p.25.

9. The pieces of the Night Vigil are taken from the Common Prayers for the Sundays after the Feast: Responses of the Night Psalms Pq III p. 26, Hymn p.29, second Hymn p.35. *Sedros* are proper.

10. New pieces were prepared for the Evening Prayer: the Opening Prayer and the Prayer of Incense. The Hymn is found in Pq III p. 23. The Supplication Song is taken from the Feast itself, Pq III p. 254. The Response of the Night Psalms p. 256, and the first and second Hymn of the Night Vigil respectively pp. 29 and 36.

11. The Opening Prayer and the Prayer of Incense are new pieces. The Supplication Song is taken from the Feast itself, at the Third Hour, Pq III p. 291. That of the Night Vigil is that of the First Sunday.

12 The Opening Prayer and the Prayer of Incense have been prepared for this Service. The Hymn is in Pq III p. 32. The Supplication Song is in Pq III, P. 51. At the Night Vigil, first Hymn p. 271, second Hymn p. 31.

13. The Opening Prayer is new. The Hymn is from the Feast itself, Pq III p. 290. For the Supplication Song, Pq III p. 25. Hymns of the Night Vigil: First Watch P. 266, Second

Watch p.37.

14. The Opening Prayer is a new composition. The Hymn is a *Madrosho* of the Feast, p. 272 and the Supplication Song is in Pq III p.25. The Hymns of the Night Vigil pp. 276 and 38.

15. The Opening Prayer is that of the Second Sunday. The Hymn is a *Madrosho* of the Feast Pq III p. 276. The Supplication Song is on p. 291. The first hymn of the Night Vigil is the same as that of the Second Sunday Pq III p. 29. The hymn of the Second Watch is part of a *Madrosho* Pq III p. 37-38.

16. This Sunday takes several pieces from the Fourth Sunday. The Hymn is from Pq III p. 275 and the Supplication Song p. 51. The Hymns of the Night Vigil pp. 30 and 270.

17. This Feast of the Mother of God originated in the Greek Church, probably in connection with the Dedication of St. Mary's Church, at Jerusalem, in 543. It came to the Syrian Catholics when they united with Rome. The Eucharistic Prayers are drawn from the *De Virginitate* of St. Ambrose of Milan! We have substituted more oriental pieces. The Feast is not celebrated by the Syrian Orthodox.

18. This weekly office in preparation for the Nativity of our Lord has been considerably enriched by us: Opening Prayer, Eucharistic Prayers, Prayer of Incense as well as Hymns for which we have drawn mainly on the Messianic oracles of the prophets.

19. Francis Xavier, the Great Missionary to Asia. This feast has been introduced by us. We borrowed the framework from the Common of the Confessors, Pq 1 p. 250. Yet much is our own composition.

20. We have preserved the original name of this Feast which celebrates the Conception of the Mother of God as an event of the Economy of Salvation. The Roman celebration is centered on the dogmatic aspect, the *immaculate* conception.

21. This office is almost entirely a new composition for which we have drawn mainly on Ignatius' own letters.

22. This office combines festive features with parts taken from the Book of Common Prayer— our Volume 1— We have preserved it as in Pq II pp. 453-462, except the two Hymns of the Night Vigil taken from Peter Chrysologus and Nicolas Cabasilas.

23. Nativity of our Lord. At the Night Vigil we have preserved only a single Hymn for each of the first three watches. They are found in Pq II pp. 474, 485 and 490, but we have introduced a Bible reading at the end of the first two watches.

24. This office has been preserved as in the Pq, except for the Acclamations before the Gospel and the Intercessions. At the Night Vigil we have kept only one hymn for each watch.

25. Here also the office has been preserved as in the Pq except for the Acclamations before the Gospel and the Intercessions.

26. These prayers for the Ferial Days after the Nativity have been considerably enriched. We have made much use of the Festal Orations of Gregory the Theologian, even for the Hymns of the Evening Prayer. We have also introduced new Hymns as that of Hippolytus. We have also provided a daily Gospel at the Evening Prayer with Intercessions. The Hymns of the first and second watches are found in pq II pp. 566 and 569; the Supplication Song p. 571.

27. The Supplication Song is that of the Feast, Pq II p. 469; the Hymn of the Second Watch, Pq II p. 570, and the Supplication Song p. 571.

28 The Hymn of the Second Watch is from the feast, Pq II p. 484.

29. Today the Pq celebrates the Circumcision of our Lord, a feast that came to the Syrian Catholics through Rome. On Jan. 1 the Orthodox *Penqitho* has: The Feast of the Beginning

of the Year. Commemoration of the Fathers, Mar Baselios and Mar Gregorios, his brother (not Nazianzus). But the prayers are all about the two Fathers. Our service of the Naming of Jesus is our own composition. It celebrates a salvific event, the conferment of the Divine Name revealed earlier by the angel. For this we have drawn mainly on the Bible and on the early Syriac tradition. But also on the Russian pilgrim. Saints Basil and Gregory are commemorated in the *Sedro* of the Night Vigil, Second Watch, the Watch of the Saints.

30. For this Feast of feasts we have preserved the two Hymns and the Supplication Song of the Evening Prayer. The material of the Night Vigil is enormous. We have chosen the second Hymn of the First Watch, Pq III p.259 and for the Second Watch, the *soghito* of Mar Ephrem, P.278 - 280.

31 As usual we have expanded the Acclamations before the Gospel and the Intercessions. The *Sedro* of the Second Watch is quite remarkable for its insights in the meaning of the celebration of the feasts of the Economy of Salvation.

32 Stephen, Firstborn of Martyrs. The *Sedro* of the First Watch in the Pq. is for the Mother of God. We have used first the *Sedro* of the Second Watch and provided a new one for the Second Watch.

33. The Days after the Baptism and Epiphany of our Lord. This office is our own composition. We wanted to celebrate the feast for eight full days. The material is provided by the Pq. We have made it on the pattern of the Ferial Days after the Nativity.

34. The Mother of God, Mother of Seeds. This feast is found in the Syrian Churches and the Coptic Church. It brings out the cosmic dimension of the Economy of Salvation, the dependence of the people on Nature, a common feature all over Asia. Such dependence becomes a source of spiritual communion when it is celebrated and contemplated in the light both of the virginity and divine motherhood of Mary.

The abundance of the material provided by the Pq witnesses to the interest taken by the Church in this mystery. We have selected the most impressive pieces. Only the concluding prayer of the Evening Service is a new composition.

35. Anthony the Great and the Desert Fathers. This monastic feast has been upgraded by us into a festive celebration of first rank. Pq III p. 375 gives only two *Sedros*. We have made use of them but we had also to compose a full office. For this we have drawn mainly on the Life of Saint Anthony written by Saint Athanasius. But for the responses to the Psalms and the Supplication Songs we have had recourse to the Common of the Fathers Pq I p. 213.

36. This is an addition to the previous edition. Following our incorporation as an abbey into the Order of the Cistercians of the Strict Observance, we had to celebrate the feast of the three founders, as we have already several feasts of monastic fathers. It is therefore our composition for which we have drawn on the Common of the Fathers but also on the early Cistercian Documents, except for the Hymn of the First Watch which is of St. Ephrem.

37. Ephrem the Syrian. This feast also has been upgraded by us. The Pq III p. 393 gives only two *Sedros*. We had to compose a full office. For this we have drawn on the writings of Saint Ephrem and on his life, but also on the Common of the Fathers, Pq I p. 213. The Hymn of the First Watch is quoted from S. Brock, The Harp of the Spirit, p.35.

38 This is the second feast of Ignatius the Fiery. It commemorates the translation of the bones of the saint to Antioch, in 408 AD. Saint John Chrysostom delivered a sermon on this subject in which he says: You lent him to Rome for a season and You received him back with interest. You sent him forth a bishop but You recovered him a martyr. You led him out with prayers but You brought him home with the laurel wreath of victory.

39. In India, the World Day of Peace is celebrated on the anniversary of the death of Mahatma Gandhi. If this day is a Sunday, our Service is celebrated on Sunday evening, replacing the second service of Monday Evening Prayer, the Service of Repentance for the Kingdom of God. It has a similar structure: Selected verses of Psalm 72, Response, Eucharistic Prayer, Hymn, Supplication Song, but it continues with a Gospel, Intercessions and Concluding Prayer as on feast days.

    Two hymns are given. In case the first has been used at the Evening Prayer, we use the second. Both are taken from the Sacred Scriptures of India, yet related to the Bible.

40. Entrance of our Lord into the Temple. Pq III p. 418 provides a full and very rich office for this feast.

41. Ephrem and Isaac the Teachers of Prayer. This feast is also celebrated on the Second Saturday of the Great Fast. It has been upgraded by us. The Pq III p. 447 gives only two *Sedros.* We have provided a full office. On account of the uncertainty still prevailing concerning the identification of the Isaac here associated with Ephrem and because of the scarcity of information about the three western Isaacs, we have turned to another Isaac, known as Isaac the Syrian, but really, Isaac of Nineveh, whose teachings on prayer have gained universal approval in the Christian Churches. He has been acclaimed as the greatest mystic of Christian Asia.

An original and quite remarkable introduction brings out both the sacramental and mystical qualities of these prayers which are rightly described as "an outstanding literary and spiritual monument of the Churches of Asia... Gems of Asian Christian theology, liturgy and spirituality... precious pearls of a spiritual tradition born and grown in Asia. The Catholic Dictionary of Theology is quoted praising Ephrem as "the greatest theologian of the patristic age and perhaps the only theologian-poet to rank beside Dante Alighieri."

The first volume of Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit itself has been greeted as "an outstanding contribution to Christian ecclesiastical literature." K.P. Padmanabhan Thampy, Editor of the Southern Chronicle and Art Critic, Trivandrum.

These prayers witness to a pneumatic mysticism, different from that of the Greek fathers which is centered on the restoration of the divine image in us through Christ, the perfect image of the Father. Such mysticism consists in the experience of the Holy Spirit. It occurs not only in the absorption of personal prayer, as in the case of Isaac the Syrian who eulogizes prayer with tears by which "the heart enters the plains of peace and serenity, and the mind finds the wisdom and power that come from grace," but also as the experience of the Holy Spirit made by the worshipping community, in the celebration of the Holy Mysteries.

"The fire of Your love inspires us
to praise Your Epiphany,
truly astounding.
It floods with light
those who contemplate it.
The splendour of the mystery
takes hold of us."